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# The Icelandic Canadian

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## EDITORIAL

This summer Norway presented Iceland with a statue of the great Icelandic historian, Snorri Sturluson (1179-1241). He was and is one of the glories of his country and age. The thirteenth century saw the full flowering of mediaeval culture in all its infinite variety and perfection. And if perfection, in the sense of a realization of all potentialities, is attainable, the thirteenth century has more of it than probably any other. In architecture the Gothic churches stand peerless. In poetry Dante is almost unapproachable. In the thirteenth century St. Thomas Aquinas accomplished one of the greatest intellectual feats of all time—"the ordered synthesis of knowledge, whether that knowledge arises from sense experience (science), or reflection (philosophy), or divine revelation (theology)," thus bringing the heritage of Greek science into living relation with mediaeval culture—a feat which the Mohammendans, in spite of a more advantageous position, failed to bring to pass. The ideal saint is seen in St. Francis, the ideal example of Christian stewardship in the temporal sphere in St. Louis of France. With a lustre equal to the above, the name of Snorri Sturluson shines in his particular sphere.

Snorri Sturluson's greatest work is the *Heimskringla* (orbis terrarum). In a sense it may be said to be the apogee of Icelandic culture. It exhibits the finest characteristics of the Icelandic genius. It achieves an almost unparalleled synthesis of objectivity and the art of narration. It is the culmination of the endeavours of the Icelanders in the historical field.

Any people might consider themselves

fortunate to possess a Snorri Sturluson. But he is merely the greatest of a long line of Icelandic historians, many of whose names are not even known. Their works are the finest flower of Icelandic culture. Happy the man who has in youth been nourished on the Sagas, doubly happy if to these has been added the Greco-Roman classics. The two are a like product. Nothing satisfies the mind as these two. To them might be applied Cicero's remarks on literature: "These studies are the food of youth, the delight of old age; the ornament of prosperity, the refuge and comfort of adversity; a delight at home, and no hindrance abroad; they are companions by night, and in travel, and in the country."

Yet there are persons of Icelandic descent who say, "I am sick and tired of this pre-occupation with Icelandic culture. It belongs to the past, not to our life here. Let us be done with it." When I hear such talk I am reminded of a passage in the Saga of King Hákon Hákonarson, quoted in the conclusion of Sirurður Nordal's pre-eminent work on Snorri Sturluson. King Hákon was possibly the greatest Norwegian king, the one who succeeded in making himself King of Iceland. He brought into Norway great foreign cultural influences, preferring, it seems, the culture of Latin Christendom to that of his native north. He was the first Norwegian king to be consecrated and crowned, by a papal legate. Success attended most of his endeavours.

The passage I refer to deals with the last illness of the king: "In his illness he at first had Latin books read to him, but then he found it great trouble to

attempt to follow their meaning. He then had Norse books read by day and by night, first lives of the saints and when these were finished, the lives of the kings, beginning with that of Halldán Svarti, and then those of all the Norwegian kings, one after another. . . . And when the lives of all the kings before Sverrir had been read, he ordered the reading of Sverrir's Saga commenced. It was then read day and night whenever he lay awake. . . . Near the middle of the night (the Saturday after the feast of Lucia) the reading of Sverrir's Saga was completed. And a little after midnight Almighty God summoned King Hákon from this terrestrial life."

Now Hákon had introduced much foreign culture into Norway, but these products of Latin Christendom proved inadequate in the final crisis. In his extremity Hákon turned for solace to the fruits of the soil of the north and, as Sigurður Nordal points out, the Icelandic nation, whom Hákon had, by questionable means, made his, offered him the final cooling draught. The hot-house growth imported from the south was as yet too alien to satisfy the spirit.

We are engaged today in building a Canadian nation and a Canadian culture. As yet these exist only in embryo. But when they have come into being

it will not be necessary for Canadians to look elsewhere for intellectual satisfaction. Until this is so the various racial groups, which are coalescing here into a new product, will be derelict in their duty unless they bring all they possess to the common hoard. Not only will they be derelict in their duty to the new nation, struggling to be born, but also to themselves as individuals. What have they but their past? Superficially something else may seem to be theirs. But the making of alien manners, customs and traditions a part of oneself is a task for generations. Grafting is a fine art. If, then, the racial groups of this country spurn their native traditions they become changelings, who belong nowhere and have nothing to give, being at ease neither with their fellows nor themselves, utterly unsatisfied with the nothingness their folly has created. They are like plants blown before the winds, seeking to root themselves but finding only a rocky, barren, impenetrable soil. Of such, a Canadian culture and a Canadian nation will never be born. Grímur Thomsen spoke truly when he said:

"Sá er bestur sálargróður  
sem að vex í skauti móður."

T. J. O.

### 51,010 People in Reykjavik

According to the last census, there are now 51,010 people resident in Reykjavik, Iceland; 24,555 men and 26,455 women. In 1945 the population was 48,186, showing an increase of 2,824 in one year.

### 455 Icelandic Seamen Lost

Since June, 1937, or during the last ten years, 455 Icelandic seamen have perished on active duty on the sea, according to the seamen's official organ, the "Sjómannadagsblaðið", Reykjavik.

### Lundar Jubilee

The committee in charge of the celebration at Lundar has decided to have printed in pamphlet form the program for the day, together with a short summary of the history of the district. The cost of the pamphlet will be very small, not more than 50 cents. Those in charge are asking the public to be so kind as to send in orders now so that they will have a clearer idea as to how many they should print. Please send your orders to Rev. H. E. Johnson, Lundar, Man.



## *Early Historical Glimpses of Icelandic People In Winnipeg*

Address Delivered Before Icelandic Canadian Club

By JÓN J. BILDFELL

When we speak of the earliest Icelandic settlement in Winnipeg, there are certain things that we must take for granted, as there are no written records of the first Icelanders who came to the then little known city of the prairies. We do not know who they were, or how many they were. What we do know is that they faced most difficult times, particularly the men, as there was little work to be had, and what little there was, was poorly paid. With the young ladies it was somewhat different. A certain number of them could find employment as domestic servants, and even though the remuneration they received was small—from \$6.00 to \$8.00 per month, as well as shelter and food—they were in a much better position than the men. While we know this to be a fact, we do not know, nor can we ever learn, what heart-rending trials these young ladies had to undergo in being separated from their families, from whom they had never been separated before and compelled to go into a totally strange world, there to compete for their survival against overwhelming odds.

As to how they met those difficulties, we happen to have indisputable testimony from one of the greatest characters of the British world of that date and the best friend the Icelandic pioneers in this country had among the Canadian people—Lord Dufferin. He said about the lady pioneers in Winnipeg in 1877: "I have learned with a great deal of satisfaction that a number of your young women have entered the households of various Canadian families, where they will not only acquire the English language—which is most desirable you should all know and

which they can teach their brothers and sisters and, I trust I may add, in course of time their own children—but will also learn those lessons of domestic economy and housewifely neat handiness of our home. I am also happy to be able to add that I have received the best account from great numbers of people of good conduct, handiness and docility of these young Ingibjörqs, Ragnhildas, Thoras and Gudruns, who I trust will do credit to the epical ancestresses from whom they have inherited their names."

Not only did these young Icelandic lady pioneers of Winnipeg fulfil these high hopes of Lord Dufferin in doing credit to the memory of their ancestresses, but in many ways surpassed them under circumstances more trying and more difficult than their ancestresses were ever called upon to meet, and I often wonder at the courage, will-power and cultural strength these young Icelandic lady pioneers in Winnipeg showed—while laying the foundation of the future Icelandic society in Winnipeg, which in itself was a great task and which they discharged with honor—but they did more. They took an active part in formulating Law and Order in the new Icelandic Settlement on the shores of Lake Winnipeg.

In order that you may realize the cultural and courageous attitude of these pioneer women of early Winnipeg, I wish to repeat a public message sent by one of the younger ones to her countrymen in New Iceland when they were having genuine Icelandic disagreement over their proposed constitution governing the new settlement.

I am not quoting the whole message, only this: "Do not discard your own culture, only what proves to be unworthy

in it. Cultivate peace and concord. Do not forget the word of God, nor good behaviour. Make your Laws as clear as you can—short, effective and righteous, and then obey them yourselves." Such was the attitude of the pioneer Icelandic women in Winnipeg—such was the cultural foundation your mothers laid, on which the Icelandic society in Winnipeg has been built.

The conditions confronting the men pioneers when they first came to Winnipeg were quite different from those of the women folks, before referred to. First, they evidently were fewer in number, which in itself was fortunate, for the chances of making a living in Winnipeg at the time of their arrival were meagre indeed. The only work for men to be found in Winnipeg after the arrival of the first Icelandic immigrants to that city was unloading steamboats and barges bringing provisions and other necessities of life from the south and loading them on boats carrying a portion of the same westward. This was at best sporadic. Occasionally work could be secured on the boats themselves—loading cordwood, as the steamers in use on the Assiniboine and Red Rivers were wood-burners at that time. The wood was cut in the winter time and piled on the river banks for the summer use, and men were needed to carry this wood from the piles on the river bank into the boats. This work was always hard, but most exacting in wet weather. The salary paid for this work was \$40.00 per month. When navigation ceased in the fall, the work available for these men closed with it, except for those who could get some firewood to cut during the winter, but to start with, there was precious little of that.

In the year 1878 an able-bodied man left his home in new Iceland on foot, in search of work and sorely-needed dollars. His destination was Winnipeg. When, after considerable time, he came home again he had this to say: "In Winnipeg I could not get any kind of work to do so I went 12 miles west

from the city, without any success in my search."

In a letter from a well-known man, Arngrímur Jónsson, dated 22nd February, 1876, we read this: "There is very little doing in Winnipeg this winter for all men except sawing wood, and for those who are permanently employed." If any of you are in doubt what permanently employed meant in those days, I can enlighten you on that point, for I happened to be so employed, the first winter I was in this country. The meaning of permanent employment or to be in permanent service, which might be a better term, was to agree verbally to work for someone for a definite period of time. The agreed time in my case was six months. My duties were to saw and split firewood for two stoves, clean a large livery barn twice a day, go with team of horses 14 miles for firewood every day excepting Sundays, cut the wood, load it on bob-sleighs, return home 14 miles in time to milk the cow and attend to the evening chores. Wages were \$5.00 per month—good food and a bed so poorly protected that, every time the wind happened to blow, my bedspread was covered with snow.

I have now, in order to get myself into this picture, run somewhat ahead of time. I was talking of the conditions and the difficulties which Icelandic male pioneers had to face when they first arrived in Winnipeg and, as a matter of fact, for the first few years that they remained here. On their arrival they faced two all-important questions. The first, how to make a living, and I have already dealt with that question to some extent. The other one was, how to secure shelter over their heads. Unoccupied houses in Winnipeg at that time were few and far between, and even if empty houses had been available, these new-comers had no money to pay rent with, so the housing question seemed hopeless, with the Western winter approaching.

It is said that every emergency provides its own solution, only if you can

see it, and these Icelandic immigrants did see it. Back from the landing place of the steamboats and immediately north of the junction of the Assiniboine river and the Red, there was vacant land known as the Hudson's Bay flats. On these flats the Icelanders, who at that time were all single men, squatted. They gathered building materials the best way they could and built themselves shanties, where they remained undisturbed for some years. This cluster of shanties was called shanty town and the inhabitants shanty dwellers.

I do not know how many these shanty dwellers were, but among them we find these names:

Jakob Eyfjord  
S. Rögnvaldson  
Stefán Stefánsson  
Sigurgeir Þorfinnsson  
Erlendur Árnason  
Sölvi Sölvason  
Hallgrímur Hólm  
Friðrik Sigurbjörnsson  
Páll Gunnlaugsson  
Jóhannes Jónsson.

Up to the time reached in my narrative, which is the year 1876, we find no indication of a permanent Icelandic settlement in Winnipeg. The Icelanders who now remained there had come with the first contingent of 300 Icelandic immigrants from Kinmount, Ont., in the fall of 1875.

I am convinced that the Icelanders who were left behind in Winnipeg (then a small town of less than two thousand souls), when the main body proceeded onward to new Iceland, had no intention of making Winnipeg their permanent home. The young men and women who remained behind did so by force of circumstances and a sense of duty. Winnipeg was the only place where there was any chance of earning the few dollars which were sorely needed to keep the wolf away from the doors of these people and their families. The first indication of per-

manency of the Icelandic Colony in Winnipeg is to be found in 1876. Then the first Icelandic home was established—that of Friðrik Sigurbjörnsson from Sjárvarland in Þistilfjörður in Iceland, and Sigríður Jónsdóttir from Geiteyarströnd at Mývatn in Iceland. They were also the first Icelandic couple to be married in Winnipeg. They were married by Rev. Páll Thorláksson on the 6th day of September, 1876, and set up their home at what was then known as No. 6 Hudson's Bay flats. To Friðrik (who was first cousin to Friðjón, Árni, Olgeir and Friðbjörn Friðrikson) and Sigríður, two children were born. Frank, born on the 25th day of September, 1877, was the first Icelandic child to be baptized in Winnipeg. That performance took place in Grace Church, which then was located on the southeast corner of Main Street and Water Avenue, where the Federal Building now stands. The name of the minister who performed the baptism was Reverend Frank Walter, and this first Icelandic child born in Winnipeg was given the minister's name because of an extended sympathy and kindness shown by the minister to the child's parents in their heroic struggle against sickness and poverty. The boy, Frank, grew up into young and exemplary manhood, was employed for a considerable time by the biggest shoe merchant in Winnipeg, and went from Winnipeg to St. Paul and Minneapolis, where he worked at the same trade. From there he went to Texas, where he bought a cotton farm, but sold that again within two years and went to San Diego, where he managed a large shoe store until he died not many years ago, respected and honored by all who knew him.

The other child of Friðrik and Sigríður was a girl, born the 27th of March, 1879. She also was baptized and named Friðrikka. When she was three months old her father died, and this young lady would have one of the most harrowing tales to tell, if she would consent to tell it, for she had to meet the responsi-

bilities of life from the time she could walk alone. You know this lady now by the name of Mrs. Halldór Thórólfsson, the mother of Pearl Thórólfsson (Mrs. Lincoln Johnson), Frank Thórólfsson, and Verbina (Mrs. Walter Allison). Sigríður, the widow of Friðrik Sigurbjörnsson, was married again to Sigurður Davidson, painter and decorator, who was widely known in Winnipeg. Among their children were John Davidson, the well known real estate man, Olga Vopni (now deceased), and Laufey (also deceased).

The second indication of permanency among the Icelandic people in Winnipeg dates from the year 1877. On the 6th day of September in that year they formed a general Icelandic organization, which they named *Íslendingafélag* (Icelandic Society). The aim of that Society is fully set forth in the main article of its constitution, which reads as follows: "The purpose of this organization is to promote and cherish the honour of the Icelandic nation on this continent; preserve and cultivate among the Icelandic people a liberal, progressive educational spirit, which has characterized the Icelandic nation from the beginning".

Further activities of this Society were stipulated in its constitution to be teaching the younger generation to read and write their own language as well as English, to assume leadership in religious activities such as reading sermons on Sundays, and to secure a place of worship whenever an Icelandic minister should visit Winnipeg.

The constitution provided also for a quarterly election of officers. The first officers elected were Jón Þórðarson, President; Arngrímur Jónsson, Secretary; and Magnús Jónsson, Treasurer. The yearly fee was fifty cents, and on the 26th day of May, 1878, there was \$10.00 in the treasury and the membership of the society at that time was 50.

The constitution of this Icelandic Society provided for a quarterly change of officers. The reason for this provi-

sion is not made clear, and I am unable to say whether it was inserted for the purpose of urging men on to greater activity or to prevent concentration of power which sometimes results from leaving the executive power in the hands of the same men too long.

The second meeting of this Society was held on the 20th February, 1878, and a new set of officers elected. They were Jón J. Júlíus, President; Bjarni Guðmundson Dalsted, Secretary; and Helgi Jónsson, Treasurer. At that meeting a raffle was held, which netted the association \$16.00. It was decided to purchase some Icelandic books and the weekly newspaper "*Ísafold*". On the 19th day of October, 1878, the society had \$30.00 in its treasury.

The leading men of the Icelandic colony in Winnipeg at that time were Jón Þórðarson from Sker in Höfðahverfi in Iceland, who came to Winnipeg with his wife Rósa Jónsdóttir, from East Laugaland in Staðarsveit in Iceland, from Milwaukee in 1877. They took up their home in Winnipeg on Main Street, north from where the City Hall now stands, and their home was known as the Icelandic house. Jón and Rósa took an active part in the cultural development of the Icelandic people in Winnipeg, and turned part of their house into a meeting place, where members of the Icelandic Society met and other activities of the Icelandic people in Winnipeg were formulated.

Jón J. Júlíus from Akureyri in Iceland was not only active in organization work but was the first man to organize the musical talent among the Icelandic people in Winnipeg and to gather the most promising ones around him to practise that noble art, which, at the same time, was of great cultural value individually as well as of social benefit.

Arngrímur Jónsson from Héðinshöfði in Iceland was a man well read and aggressive.

Helgi Jónsson from Skriðdal in Iceland  
(Continued on page 42)



# GLÍMA

or

## *The Icelandic Way Of Wrestling*

This is the second in a series of articles from Iceland written for this magazine. The author, Thorsteinn Einarsson, is Director of Athletics in the Department of Education of Iceland. He, as so many other prominent men in Iceland, is very anxious that the cultural bonds between the people of our mother country and us be maintained. In the translation I have added a word or two in a few places where deemed necessary for the North American reader. The footnotes are mine.—W. J. Lindal.

Three illustrations selected from the national life of the Icelandic people about a generation ago suffice to show the extent to which the Icelandic sport known as "Glíma" has been a factor in the daily life of the people.

Two shepherd boys from neighboring farmsteads are watching over their sheep, one on each side of a little vale. They cross the river to visit each other. They tell stories, ask for news, erect shepherds' huts, play with leg and huckle bones, and stage a wrestling match on a level grass plot on the bank of the river. For a good portion of a day they may test each other's skill. Or they may practice some special "bragð", (1) or dexterous move in throwing an opponent, which they have seen some of the men practice after church or at some other public meeting. Many an Icelander, who tended sheep in his youth, has vivid recollections from the shepherd days when he wrestled with other shepherds in the vicinity. Thus the tending of the sheep became a school and one of the subjects was the "glíma".

(1) There is no exact equivalent in English for the word "bragð". In defining it Cleasby, in his Icelandic-English dictionary, says: "The fundamental notion is that of a sudden motion . . . in wrestling 'bragð' or 'brögð' is the technical phrase for wrestlers' tricks or sleights." But they are more than tricks or sleights; they are the various ways in which the art and technique of glíma is gracefully and skilfully carried out.

From January until May each year young men were engaged in rowing fish-boats on the ocean. They gathered on the sea-shore at places where the distance to good fish-banks was not too great. Such places were called "ver" or fishing camps. Those who rowed in the one boat, lived in the same house, and these houses were called "búðir" (2) or temporary abodes. Thus the crew of each boat was a unit or an organization by itself. When storms raged and it was impossible to row out to sea, it became necessary to seek some kind of entertainment, and in such cases the main sport was Icelandic wrestling. Sometimes the wrestling was free—a person could wrestle with anyone willing to take him on, but at other times the crew of one boat engaged the crew of another. This type of wrestling was called "bændaglíma." (3)

(2) A "búð" is a temporary dwelling, a booth or a shop or a combination of them. There were "farmanna búðir", merchants booths, erected for temporary use and removed when the ships sailed out to sea. The most famous búðir were the temporary abodes of members of parliament on "Þingvellir", the Parliament Plains. The session lasted only two weeks and the rest of the year the búðir were empty.

(3) A bændaglíma dates back to the days of the Icelandic Commonwealth. At a gathering young men were divided by lot into two groups who formed into opposing lines. Each team had a leader called "bóndi", hence the word "bændaglíma". (Icelandic is

Many people from two or more parishes flock together for entertainment. At such gatherings there is singing, dancing and wrestling. The best wrestler from each parish selects wrestlers from his parish and then his group competes with a group selected in the same way from another parish. This team-wrestling provided excellent entertainment, which was enjoyed by women as well as men, children no less than old people. Long afterwards, it happened on many an occasion that these great wrestling contests would be discussed as if they had been important historic events.

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Thus the glíma flourished among the Icelandic people from age to age and was passed on to the present generation. The glíma is equally a part of our heritage as is our history and our language.

What is the origin of the glíma? That is a question which has not yet been answered. None of the sports among our neighboring nations have been known by that name. True, the people of the Faroe Islands use the same word; but to them it simply means a friendly contest with someone, the very opposite to fighting, which connotes a contest in anger.

So also the western nations engage in different kinds of wrestling which are ancient in origin, but none of them resemble the glíma except that of the Swiss, which they call "Schwingen".

The original settlers of Iceland

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highly inflectional, which causes the change in spelling.) The word *bóndi*, which in modern common use means a farmer, formerly had a much more extended meaning. It meant a husbandman, the owner and manager of a farmstead, where there were always a number of servants "*vinnufólk*". The position of a *bóndi* in a community was similar to that of an English yeoman or Roman *paterfamilias*. The "*bændur*," that is, the captains, paired the men, and each pair wrestled in the space between the ranks. Sometimes the match between the opposing captains decided the game.

brought two kinds of wrestling with them: "*hryggspenna*" or back-spanning and "*lausatök*" or catch-as-catch-can.

In *hryggspenna* each contestant clasped his arms around the body of the other. The right arm was placed under the left arm of the opponent and the left arm above his right. The hands were clasped together at the back and each tried to bend the body of the other backwards until he was forced to the ground. Sometimes contestants were permitted to use their feet in their effort to throw one another.

Catch-as-catch-can was a kind of a scuffle. Any kind of a hold of the opponent was permitted and he could be thrown to the ground by use of the hands, the weight of the body or the skill of the feet. Sometimes this sport was kept within limiting rules. Contestants were clad in a "*kúfl*" or "*fangstakk*"--a wrestling jerkin or close waistcoat, which was grasped by the opponent. The wrestling had to be within a fixed area. During ancient times, when the contest was sometimes a duel for life or death, a sharp-edged slab of stone, edge upwards, was placed within the prescribed area and each sought to force his antagonist down on the edge of the stone and either break his back or the lower part of his breast-bone. The back-spanning and catch-as-catch-can were called "*fang*" (4) (wrestling). On Parliament Plains (5) there is a place which is called "*fangbrekka*", a wrestling-slope. The surrounding topography indicates that the onlookers sat on the slope of the rising ground above, while on the level ground below men took part

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(4) "*Fang*" means "catching" in the sense of obtaining control of something, and was used in both a friendly and antagonistic sense. For instance, "*fá konu fangi*" means to wed a woman, hence the word "*kvonfang*". But "*færast eitthvað í fang*" means to have something in one's grip, hence the modern word "*fangi*", a prisoner. It is thus easy to understand how the two ancient forms of wrestling came to be called *fang*.

in "fangi", that is, wrestling. Many phrases show that this fang must have been quite common; for instance, "að hafa undirtökin", to be inferior, "að hafa yfirtökin", to be superior. (6) So also, "að ljá fangastaðar á sér", to let oneself be caught; and the modern "viðfangsefni", something with which one deals. Many other instances could be given. ★

Some people are of the opinion that the origin of the glíma is to be found in these two forms of wrestling. But when?

There are really two schools of thought on this subject. One holds that when the people of Iceland adopted Christianity in the year 1000 they abolished many heathen customs, and these two forms of wrestling were included. The glíma was then developed and it is, therefore, a Christian custom. The other holds that the glíma originated in the two ancient seats of learning, Skálholt (7) and Hólar. (8) Young men congregated at these schools and, in spite of the strict discipline of the church, engaged in different kinds of sport and amusement. In those sports the glíma was a gradual growth. One thing is certain. In both these schools there was wrestling, but the type of wrestling differed and this difference in the two styles and rules have been perpetuated to the present time, and this in spite of the fact that both schools ceased to exist about one hundred and fifty years ago.

What is the meaning of the word

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(5) The Althing or Parliament of Iceland came into existence in the year 930. The place selected, called Þingvellir, a plain where a "thing" or an assembly meets, was one of inspiring grandeur and beauty. It is a short distance from the capital, Reykjavik, and here the Althing met in open air until 1798.

(6) See description of the hold in hryggspenna.

(7) Founded in 1056.

(8) Founded in 1107.

"glíma"? It means "leiftur," a flash, something which happens very suddenly. The same root is to be found in the English word "glimpse" and the Danish word "glimt".

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In the year 1908 the glíma was staged at the Olympic games in London, and again in 1912 in Stockholm. After these exhibitions we decided to make the glíma known among other nations and published a text book on glíma and formulated certain rules which have to be followed in all contests. In modern glíma the wrestlers wear glímuföt, wrestling-dress, consisting of socks and a combination pants and shirt, with a protective cover around the groin. Each wrestler wears three leather belts, one around the waist and one around each thigh, those around the thighs being fastened by straps to the one around the waist.

The two wrestlers enter the place of wrestling, which is a smooth bare floor made of lumber. They greet each other by shaking hands. Each takes hold of the waist-belt of the other with his right hand and with the left hand grasps the belt which is around the right thigh of his opponent.

They must stand erect, each a little to the right of the other, the right foot advanced from the left foot. They look over each other's shoulders but never down at the feet. This is because they are to wrestle by touch and feeling and not by sight. When they are ready a signal is given for them to start. The contestants seek to throw each other by causing the opponent to lose his balance. They may warily step back and forth or move around to the left. Each tries to hook a foot around a foot of the other or place it in front of his feet and trip him; or he may heave him into the air and by skilful use of his feet prevent him from alighting on his and thus throw him to the ground.

There are seven main kinds of "brögð" or ways of throwing an adversary, although each can be interpreted

What is the meaning of the word or applied in different ways. The contestant who falls to the floor loses the glíma. By falling is meant merely to touch the floor with any part of the body from the elbows to the knees.

★

This sport—the glíma—has been inherited by modern Icelanders from the shepherds who played with each other on the moors, from fishermen who needed entertainment as they braved the elements on the coasts of Iceland, hunters on the frozen lakes who needed exercise to keep them warm, students who sought an outlet for their pent-up energy, and people in general who desired to come together at meeting places in the parishes.

Now the youth of Iceland train in this sport but under different conditions. Instead of the banks of a river, the ice of frozen lakes or level bits of land by the sea there are spacious athletic halls.

We are introducing the glíma in other countries and we stage it at large athletic meets and are commended for

it. In that very way and under our own flag we are making Iceland known to others. The glíma is manly and embraces the good qualities of true sport. It exercises all the muscles of the body. It develops courage and endurance, the qualities of mind conveyed in the Icelandic word “drenghapur” and, to a slightly lesser degree, in the English word “gentleman”. This sport demands thinking and stimulates speed and quick movements.

I was much pleased when I was informed in Winnipeg, on my visit there a short time ago, that the Icelanders there still practice this sport.

It is to be hoped that the art of glíma-wrestling will be renewed at contests staged in Canada, where teams of wrestlers from Iceland meet similar teams from the Icelandic settlements. Such meets would be very pleasant indeed and would bring you closer to us as the glíma has brought the modern Icelandic people closer to our forefathers.

THORSTEINN EINARSSON.

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## Icelandic Folklore

By MARGARET L. WANDREY

I often wonder, if and when—  
 The tröllskessa\* will live again?  
 For as a child, I loved so well—  
 The stories older people tell,  
 Of all the elves in rock or glen.  
 I wish someone would tell again—  
 Some of the tales when watching sheep,  
 Some lonely herder, there did keep—  
 A rendezvous, with clouds so near—  
 The time, the many elves appeared—  
 The tröllskessa may be asleep—  
 But, how and where do stories keep?  
 Unless someone who heard or knew;  
 Tells all these tales, false or true.

\* A female troll or giant.



## Lundar Diamond Jubilee

By Hólmfríður Danielson

An ancient Viking vessel, sailing along the main street of Lundar, Manitoba, its fiery-eyed dragon's head seeming to breathe forked tongues of flame into the sunlit air, aroused the excited interest of more than 3,000 spectators, some of whom had come from as far as Vancouver, B.C., and Seattle, Wash., to enjoy the festivities when Lundar celebrated its 60th anniversary, Sunday, July 6th.

The model of the Viking ship, symbolizing the background of the Icelandic pioneers who first came to the district in 1887, formed the vanguard of a long and colorful procession of floats and vehicles of an historical significance which, heralded by a brass band from Morden, Man., circled the town and came to a halt beside the speakers' stand in the fair grounds.

The parade depicted the progress in transport achieved in a few short years, from the plodding yoke of oxen and down to the streamlined 1947 model automobile. In between there were: the Indian on his pinto pony; the Red River cart; the covered wagon, escorted by mounted riders; the debonnaire gentleman and his lady, garbed in the garments of 1890, and driving their handsome "carriage and pair"; the aristocratic covered buggy and the more common "democrat," all peopled with figures typical of these bygone days. The oxen, belonging to a Ukrainian settler, were imported from north of Framnes, Man. The Red River cart was borrowed from Lower Fort Garry, Winnipeg.

There was a float depicting an Indian tepee, nestling in a green grove of pines. The first vehicle to herald the advent of motorized transport into the district was a model-T Ford, vintage 1914, which, however, had lost the power

of propulsion and was tenderly towed by a cream-colored Monarch De Luxe.

The remarkably lifelike dragon's head decorating the ship was designed and painted by Mrs. J. S. Sigurdson, and constructed by her father, Sigurdur D. Holm. Mrs. Sigurdson and her husband, dressed to represent a Viking and his lady, stood in the prow of the vessel.

The multitude of people was enthusiastic about the log cabin erected on the fair grounds for the occasion. Under



The Dragon's Head

its sod roof were sheltered many interesting relics of pioneer days. The most outstanding exhibit was a shelf of rare old books brought from Iceland by the settlers. One of these, which the owner (Mrs. Lulla Sveinsson), with utter confidence, left unguarded all day, was a precious manuscript more than 200 years old, its binding weathered and worn and its yellowed pages containing a collection of literary treasures.

Festooned with the banner of the British Empire, the Canadian Ensign and the flag of Iceland were the

speakers' platform and the pavilion reserved for the pioneers who were the honored guests of this festival.

While the colorful parade wound passed, one could glimpse a wistful look or a furtive tear on faded cheeks as thoughts of the first settlers turned back to other days. No doubt the glistening new cars made them think of the arduous trips to Winnipeg to sell their produce and buy supplies. These trips were made in the spring and fall, the spring trips after the snow drifts had melted but before the frost was out of the ground. Travelling the 70-

plain was frozen over so that the men had to walk ahead of the teams to break the ice."

Sitting beside the frail, beautiful old lady in the pioneers' pavilion was the "small son" who had shared these adventures with her. He is now Dr. K. J. Backman, an eminent Winnipeg physician, and the first student from the Lundar area to graduate in medicine. Since then seven other young men from the district have become doctors.

Also seated in the pavilion were Miss Salome Halldorson, former M.L.A. for St. George, and her brother, Chris Hall-



Junior choir of girls in costume at Lundar jubilee

odd miles in caravans so they could help one another when their ox carts got stuck in the gumbo, they spent three days going each way.

"I remember one trip in particular," said Mrs. Holmfridur Backman, one of the earliest settlers, whose husband, Daniel, passed away a year ago. — "A tent was provided for me to sleep in as I had my small son with me. During the second night there was a raging snow storm so that the tent was blown down, but we managed to adjust it again. In the morning the vast expanse of surface water covering the whole

dorson, the present member in the Manitoba legislature. They are descendants of the first settlers.

Mrs. Hinrik Johnson could not accept the invitation to attend as an honored guest, as the 84-year-old lady had just left by airplane to visit a daughter in Iceland. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson had the first post office in the district and named it Lundi for her home in Iceland, but through some error at Ottawa it became Lundar.

The speakers of the day, who outlined the 60 years' history of the district, which includes the eastern settlement

of Shoal Lake and the west part originally called Swan Lake (Alftavatnsbyggð), paid tribute to the hardihood and courage of the pioneers. "There were not enough crops and not enough cattle," said Paul Reykdal, who came to the settlement with his parents, and is now president of the Viking Fisheries,



Log cabin with sod roof

Winnipeg, "but there was enough of faith and of the spirit of progress to carry the settlers forward to build out of the bush and the swamp a flourishing and culturally minded community."

Other speakers were: Skuli Sigfusson, who has been representative from the constituency of St. George to the Manitoba legislature for five terms and still resides in the Lundar district; Rev. A. E. Kristjansson, former M.L.A., now

resident in Blaine, Wash., and Dr. R. Beck, of the Grand Forks University, N. D.

A musical program featured the Lundar Male Voice Choir conducted by V. J. Guttormsson, with his granddaughter, Irene Guttormsson, at the piano, and a junior choir of girls in costume, who sang and performed folk dances under the direction of Mrs. H. E. Johnson.

Soloists were Miss Inga Bjarnason, of Winnipeg, and O. Hjartarson, of Steep Rock, Man., accompanied by G. Erlendson, Winnipeg. Original poems were read by B. E. Johnson, V. J. Guttormsson, Dr. S. J. Johannesson, Ragnar Stefansson, and H. E. Magnusson.

Hon. J. C. Dryden, Provincial Minister of Education, brought greetings from the Manitoba government, while G. L. Johannson, Icelandic consul at Winnipeg, conveyed the greetings of his government. Reeve K. Byron represented the municipality, and Rev. V. J. Eylands, pastor of the First Lutheran Church, brought congratulations from the Icelandic National League.

Chairman of the day was Rev. H. E. Johnson, pastor of the Federated Church of Lundar. Mrs. L. Sveinson was in charge of arrangements for the parade and exhibits.

## Vancouver Representatives

Purely as a goodwill gesture toward the Icelandic Canadian, Mr. S. Gudmundson, 12 Fourth Ave. E., has offered to represent the Magazine in Vancouver. He has already sent in some interesting news items and several new subscriptions, and firmly declined to accept commission.

Mrs. Skordal continues to collect and send to our War Effort Editor news and pictures of service personnel, and also accepts subscriptions. Mrs. L. Sumarliðason has sent interesting items.

★

During the Confederation talks between Newfoundland and Canada, the Newfoundland delegates couldn't get their tongues around the French pronunciation of the surname of External Affairs Minister St. Laurent, which sounds something like "San Lawran". So they called him Sally Rand!

★

In opera the baritone hardly ever wins the heroine and he is often the villain. Robert Merrill, Metropolitan opera star, is tired of this situation, and he is offering a \$1,000 prize for a one-act opera in English by an American composer where a heroic baritone wins the girl.

## *The Lundar Pioneers*

---

I stand among the multitude, observing  
My native district's Diamond Jubilee,  
And watch the ox-cart, buggies and jalloppies  
Parading in symbolic pageantry.

Then, from the stage, a voice I've known a lifetime  
Unfolds the saga of the pioneers,  
Recalling all the obstacles they conquered—  
I listen, and compare my lot with theirs.

From Iceland's rocky shores and mountain valleys  
They packed their scant belongings o'er the sea,  
And, like their Viking forebears, made the voyage  
To the land of promise and prosperity.

The soil they chose was stony and unyielding.  
'Twas not as rich as that in other parts.  
But the challenge of its stubborn dissolution  
Was answered from the staunchness of their hearts.

Their children reap the harvest of their toiling,  
And bring more potent weapons to the bout.  
We buy machine-made tools to do our labors,  
While they devised their own, or did without.

They walked for miles a treasured book to borrow,  
And in the evening, grouped around the fire,  
They read aloud the sagas of their homeland.  
We buy with ease the books that we desire.

Where once their ox-carts trekked across the prairie,  
We travel in a speedy limousine;  
And if we count the journey long and weary,  
We are not thinking what theirs must have been.

We take for granted all the modern comforts  
With which we, in an easier age, are blessed.  
Control things, then undreamed, by pushing switches  
Because the land we live in has progressed.

So I hear the record of their strivings,  
And note the difference made across the years—  
Compare my life of ease with theirs of hardship,  
I take my hat off to the pioneers.

—Art Reykdal.



## *Summer Camps*

### ICELANDIC WOMEN SPONSOR TWO FRESH AIR CAMPS

By Caroline Gunnarsson

Twelve days of freedom from the dust and heat of city pavements—twelve golden days of sunshine, fresh air and swimming each summer of their childhood. That is the gift of the Alliance of Icelandic Liberal Christian Women to a number of urban children.

The Alliance of Icelandic Liberal Christian Women was organized 21 years ago. It is composed of nine Ladies' Aids of Icelandic Federated Churches in Canada, and is affiliated with the General Alliance in Boston. This year Mrs. S. E. Bjornson began her nineteenth year as president of the organization.

This yearly boon to sun-hungry children had its beginning long before the year 1938, when the present camp was opened.

Feeling that many youngsters were foregoing the benefit of a summer sun in clear country air near a lakeshore, the Alliance put forth a sturdy effort in behalf of the little folk. For several years they sponsored summer holidays for city children at Gimli, Manitoba. Billeted wherever accommodation could be obtained, as many as 70 children took their turn at the lakeside each summer free of charge. Surely a record for benevolent organization to be proud of.

In 1936 location was chosen for a permanent camp at Hnausa, Manitoba. The buildings were constructed on 150 feet of lake front the following year, and during the summer of 1938 the camp doors swung open to its little guests. Covering approximately six acres, the land allows for generous expansion, as the Alliance has great faith in the healthy growth of this work in years to come.

The Federated Fresh Air Camp was built and is being maintained almost

entirely by private donations and the proceeds of concerts, teas and various other endeavours undertaken by the Alliance. No fee is asked for children staying at the camp, and while many parents like to pay for the accommodation, such contributions are on a purely voluntary basis.

Secure in the care of three paid workers and a good staff of volunteers, 52 girls splashed away twelve happy days of July this year, while 27 boys took over at the beginning of August.

For one week each summer this holiday home belongs to a group of young people interested in Youth Leadership. Here their days of earnest work and study are interlaced with carefree hours of swimming and sunning. All operating expenses are paid by this group during the period they have possession of the camp.

\* \* \*

The clouds that hung heavily over Husavik, Manitoba, on Sunday, June 22nd, 1947, broke into a downpour which drenched the day from one end to the other. Yet, undampened were the spirits of a group of visitors alighting from cars and buses near Sunrise Camp. Undaunted in their faith that clouds on our side of the sun are seldom more than a filmy mist, they slushed happily toward the Memorial Building. This last in a group of six houses comprising the camp was being dedicated on this occasion—dedicated to the memory of Icelandic Canadians who gave their lives in the great world conflicts fought by two succeeding generations.

This auditorium building is designed to be the home of religious worship and other cultural pursuits within the camp. It was paid for by a Memorial Fund subscribed to by individuals feeling

that loved ones who didn't return from the battlefields would be well remembered in this lasting contribution to the welfare of a rising generation.

Most of the visitors were on familiar ground, for just one year ago the rest of the camp had been dedicated and opened for invasion by hordes of little folk and their mothers, as well as study groups of young people interested in Sunday School work and Christian leadership.

The chapter of unselfish labour, quiet devotion and co-operation preceding this triumphant climax belongs to The Lutheran Women's League. Eighteen Ladies' Aids of the Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North America are members of that organization, and its president, at this time, is Mrs. S. Olafson, of Selkirk, Manitoba.

For a period of three years the League sponsored a Christian Leadership group at the Canadian Sunday School Mission Camp, on Lake Winnipeg, and for one year at Rock Lake, Man. Here young men and women spent part of their summer holidays mingling with people of their own age whose mutual interest in Sunday School work had drawn them to the camp from different districts and congregations. Ministers of The Lutheran Synod and other youth leaders lectured to the group and gave instruction and guidance in this phase of the church work.

When rented camps were no longer available, a motion was passed by the League in convention that an effort be made to build a camp of their own.

Immediate effort followed the motion, and during the war years, when the average income was being drained by numerous demands, funds were solicited from the public and obtained in generous amounts. A large area of land was purchased and landscaped by experts. As soon as materials and labour became available, actual construction of the camp was accomplished.

Starting out with the Christian Leadership Group, the enterprise has grown into a regular summer camp, where children are invited to spend an annual holiday at a nominal charge. Tiny tots of six years and under, with their mothers, have the camp to themselves for one week each summer, while older children, ranging from seven years to the senior group, above confirmation age, have their week at the camp in alternate age groups.

Rev. E. H. Fafnis, who was this summer elected president of the Icelandic Lutheran Evangelical Synod, has been dean of the camp since it was first organized. There is also an adequate staff of swimming instructors, recreation leaders, matron, nurse, and other experienced personnel.

Situated about 56 miles from Winnipeg, and accessible by daily buses from Winnipeg, Selkirk, Riverton, Hnausa, Arnes and Gimli, Sunrise Lutheran Camp lies conveniently in the beaten track of a large portion of the people it was founded to serve, and so far they have made good use of it.

## THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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## *Folk Festivals*

When bits of all the races of the earth are shaping themselves into one great nation, the need of that nation to know itself is well served by folk festivals. Two such festivals of importance have been held this year. One in the U.S.A., at St. Paul, Minnesota; the other in Canada's Vancouver. It is not surpris-

is significant to note that when this festival was first introduced, in 1932, only 15 national groups took part.

Just four ladies represented Iceland in the opening parade the first evening. They were Mrs. Gunnar Bjornson, Mrs. G. T. Adalsteins, Mrs. Matthildur Bjornson, and Miss Margret Indridadottir, a



Icelandic exhibit at St. Paul, Minn.

cover what others have brought of character, culture and history to the land of their common choice as they are to display their own contributions.

The sixth Festival of Nations was held at St. Paul, Minnesota, April 24-27, and sponsored by the International Institute. Thirty-nine nationalities were representing to learn that both festivals gained enthusiastic support and acclaim, for all ethnic groups are as eager to display and 3,000 persons participated. It

young newspaper woman from Iceland, doing post-graduate work in journalism in the U. S. A. All wore the Icelandic national costume, Mrs. Bjornson the beautiful distinguished "faldbuning", the others the "upphlut". Friends kept swelling their ranks, however, and the last evening their strength was up to seven.

Racial characteristics and temperament were vividly expressed in folk dances, music and other cultural enter-



Miss Margaret Sigmar

tainment displayed. Gudmundur Hjalmarson and Stefan Ingvarson held the stage for Iceland with a bout of Icelandic Glíma.

In the exhibition hall the Hekla Club picked up the banner for the old land. The sale of Icelandic delicacies was pre-Antique silver, beautifully carved old sided over by Mrs. G. T. Adalsteins. treasures of wood and other curiosities were also displayed in their booth. Mrs. G. Bjornson and her assistants answered questions and supplied information about the exhibits and the land they came from.

On May 1, 2 and 3, the city of Vancouver stepped out with the first Dominion Folk Festival. It was sponsored by the Canadian Folk Society. This group exists to save and nurture the priceless cultural heritages brought to this country by various races of the world, and to promote understanding and appreciation of Canadian citizenship. An ardent supporter of the society since its organization, Mr. L. H. Thorlakson was the first president of the British Columbia branch. He is now its immediate Past President.

Twenty-two national groups were represented in the Festival, and Miss Margaret Sigmar did royally by the Icelandic group. Lovely in the queenly "faldbuning", she sang two Icelandic songs, "The Land of Dreams" and "The Swan Song of the Heath". Completely captivating the audience, she won a thunderous applause, and the daily papers singled her out for special mention.

Dr. Habersky, Czech representative to the U.N.O., said all there need be said for this type of effort. After visiting the St. Paul Festival, his words were to the effect that such a festival did more to promote understanding and goodwill among nations than 50 resolutions passed by the United Nations Organization.



## *Norway Honors Snorri Sturluson*

An event of great interest to all persons of Icelandic descent took place at Reykholt in Iceland on the 20th of

The idea of honouring the memory of Snorri Sturluson in this manner originated with the Young People's Societies



**Snorri Sturluson**

July this year. On that day Crown Prince Olav of Norway unveiled a statue of the great historian, Snorri Sturluson, which the Norwegian people had presented to the Icelandic nation.

of Norway, and was later taken up by the National Federation of Farmers and various labour, professional and cultural organizations. Norway's leading sculptor, Gustav Vigeland, was commis-

sioned to execute the monument, and the funds required were raised by individual contributions from thousands of Norwegians. No contributions from the state or private corporations were solicited.

It had been intended to make the presentation on the 700th anniversary of Snorri's death (1941), but the outbreak of war and the subsequent seizure of Norway by the Germans made it impossible to carry out that plan.

The delegation which brought this magnificent gift was headed by the Crown Prince, and included, among others, the Prime Minister of Norway, Einar Gerhardsen, and the distinguished scholar, Prof. Sheteling.

Speaking at the unveiling ceremonies, which were attended by some eight thousand people, Crown Prince Olav declared that while Snorri Sturluson had by his own writings built himself an imperishable monument, yet the people of Norway wished to acknowledge in a tangible way their great debt to the prince of Icelandic literature. Prof. Sheteling, speaking in a similar vein, expressed the opinion that the great national awakening in Norway in the early years of the last century would have been impossible but for the writings of Snorri. "Heimskringla is our greatest national treasure," he added.

Snorri Sturluson was born in Iceland in 1178 or 1179. His father was Sturla Thordarson, the founder of the Sturlungs, the most remarkable and the most gifted of all the Icelandic families of that period. At the age of 20 Snorri married a woman of means, and a few years later settled at Reykholt, where he lived to the end of his days in feudal state. He became the richest man in Iceland and occupied the highest office

in the land, that of Lawman, on two occasions, serving two periods of four years each. He played a prominent, and not always a creditable, part in the affairs of Iceland in the turbulent dying days of the old republic. There is reason to believe that he conspired with King Hákon to bring Iceland under Norwegian domination, although he showed no great zest in furthering that cause. Nevertheless, if judged solely by his private life and political activities, his claim to fame and honour would be small indeed. He was slain at Reykholt by Gissur Thorvaldsson on 22nd Sept., 1241.

Snorri Sturluson, the greatest name in Scandinavian literature, is first and foremost an historian. In this field he has few peers and the northern nations have yet to produce his equal. His "Heimskringla" (Sagas of the Norwegian Kings) contains the most trustworthy record now available of the history of the Scandinavian people down to the reign of Sverri in 1177. His other major work, the Prose Edda, contains scholarly treatises on the rules and theories of ancient verse, and a priceless sketch of Norse mythology known as "Gylfaginnig," which is one of the most precious gems of Icelandic literature. Judged by these two works Snorri is still regarded as the greatest master of Icelandic prose that ever lived.

In the space of seven hundred years the wheel has come full circle. Snorri, the crafty chief and one of the destroyers of his country's freedom, was slain at the instigation of Hákon, King of Norway. Now the son of Hakon, King of Norway, comes to pay tribute to Snorri, the historian, the great preserver of our ancient heritage.

H. Th.

## OUR WAR EFFORT



L.A.C. Johann Arnason

L.A.C. T. K. Arnason

L.A.C. V. M. Arnason

**L.A.C. JOHANN ARNASON**—Born at Big Island, Man., June 18, 1914. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. as air frame carpenter Nov. 9, 1943. Trained at Galt and St. Thomas, Ont. Was stationed at Patricia Bay and Sea Island, B. C. Discharged Nov. 23, '45.

**L.A.C. THEODORE K. ARNASON**—Born at Gimli, Man., June 25, 1918. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. as aero engine mechanic Sept. 16, 1941. Trained at Winnipeg, Man., and St. Thomas, Ont. Stationed at Paulson, Gimli and Souris, Man. Disch. Nov. 3, '45.

**L.A.C. VALDIMAR M. ARNASON**—Born at Gimli, Man., April 30, 1917. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. as wireless electrical mechanic Dec. 29, 1941. Trained at No. 8 Wireless school at Montreal, P.Q. Instructed in radio in No. 3 Wireless school at Winnipeg, Man. Stationed at Patricia Bay, B. C. Discharged Sept. 14, 1945.

**SONS OF MR. & MRS. GUDJON ARNASON, GIMLI, MAN.**

### STAFF SGT. EINAR KRISTJAN OLAFSON

★

Born at Winnipeg, Man., Feb. 6, 1921. Enlisted Nov. 21, 1942. Took his basic training at Sheppard Field, Texas. Was at Combat Intelligence School at Salt Lake City, Utah. He was Air Combat Intelligence N.C.O. at Pocatello, Idaho, Mountain Home, Idaho, Tonopah, Nev., and Oahu, Hawaiian Is. Received the American and Pacific theatre ribbons and Good Conduct Medal.

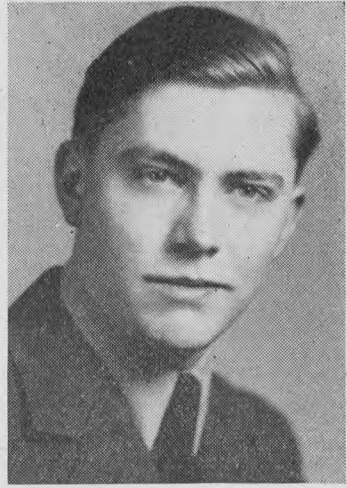
Son of Haraldur and Maria Olafson,  
Mountain, N. D.



S/Sgt. E. K. Olafson



**JOHN GAUTI**—Born at Pembina, N. D., May 30, 1912. Enlisted Dec. 9, 1941. Trained at Regina, Sask., Calgary, Alta., and Victoria, B.C. Went overseas May 1943. Served in England, France and Holland. Was wounded in France. Discharged Feb. 1, 1946. Son of the late Thorstein Jónsson Gauti and Áslaug Jónsdóttir (from Mýri in Iceland), Wynyard, Sask.



**SGT. FRÍÐBJÖRN HALLDOR GUNN-LAUGSON**—Born at Regina, Sask., Aug. 7, 1924. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. June 1943. Trained at Edmonton, Alta, Regina, Assiniboia, Sask., Patricia Bay, B.C., and MacDonald, Man. Received his wings in Jan. 1945. Transferred to R.C.A.F. air crew reserve March 1945. Only son of Mr. & Mrs. Olgeir Gunnlaugson, Wynyard, Sask.



**P.O. GESTUR EINAR ODDLEIFSON**—Born at Arborg, Man., Oct. 23, 1922. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Nov. 10, 1942. Trained at Saskatoon, Davidson, Sask., Dauphin, Man., and Calgary, Alta. Graduated as pilot Oct. 6, 1944. Placed in air crew reserve Jan. 17, 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Sigurdur O. Oddleifson, Arborg, Man.



**1st LIEUT. ANDRES FREEMAN**—Born at Svold, N. D., July 29, 1919. Enlisted July 10, 1942. Served in Minnesota, Missouri, California, Arizona and Kansas. Still in the service of U. S. Army. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Halldor Bjarnason, Blaine, Wash. U.S.A.



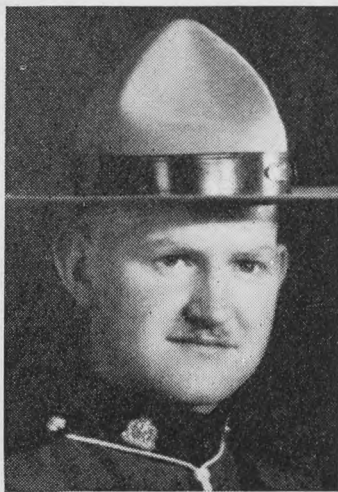


**Björn M. & Ferdinand M. Hofteig**

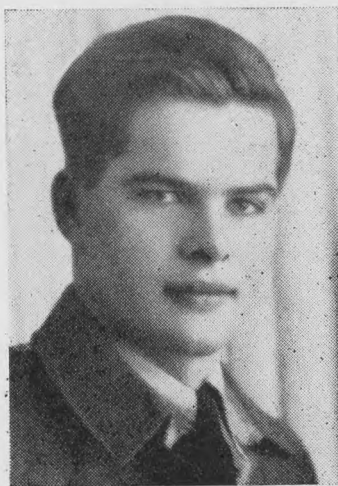
**M.M. MATE 1/c BJÖRN MATTHEW HOFTEIG**—Born at Minneota, Minn., Dec. 30, 1944. Joined the U.S. Navy Dec. 15, 1942. Trained at U.S. Naval Stn. at Farragut, Idaho, as motor mechanics mate first class. Discharged at San Pedro, Calif., Feb. 4, 1946.

**FERDINAND MARINO HOFTEIG**—Born at McCreary, Man., March 10, 1926. Joined the Canadian Navy March 24, 1944. Served on H.M.C.S. Huron at Bermuda and on H.M.C.S. Uganda around the coast of South America.

**SONS OF  
MR. & MRS. STEPHEN HOFTEIG,  
LUNDAR, MAN.  
FORMERLY OF McCREARY, MAN.**



**PTE. STANLEY JACOBSON**—Born at Geyser, Man., March 28, 1925. Enlisted in Infantry of Canadian Army Jan. 18, 1945. Trained at Ft. Garry and Camp Shilo, Man. Discharged Oct. 20, 1945. Is at present with the R.C.M.P. at Calgary, Alta. Son of Unnsteinn and Helga Jacobson, Geyser, Man.



**PTE. EDWARD GILBERT MCCARTHY**—Born at Portage La Prairie, Man., Mar. 23, 1927. Joined the Infantry of the Canadian Army April 10, 1945. Was stationed at Ft. Garry, Shilo, Man., and Port Arthur, Ont. Son of Jerry and Margaret (Borgfjörð) McCarthy, Lundar, Man.

**F.O. Goodwin Sveinson****Cpl. Eleanor Sveinson****Gnr. Emil Sveinson**

**F.O. GOODWIN SVEINSON**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., March 29, 1920. Joined the R.C.A.F. Aug. 28, 1941. Served in N. Africa and England. Discharged Oct. 9, 1945.

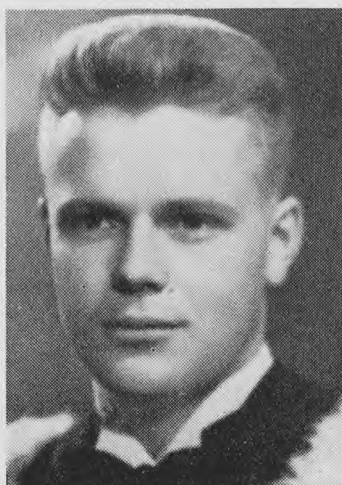
**CPL. ELEANOR SVEINSON**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., Jan. 23, 1924. Joined the C.W.A.C. April 8, 1943. Served as clerk in R.C.E. office, Ottawa, Ont. Discharged August 9, 1945.

**GNR. EMIL SVEINSON**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., Sept. 26, 1921. Joined R.C.A. Dec. 14, 1942. Discharged April 5, 1946.

**SONS & DAUGHTER OF SVEINN G. AND SIGRIDUR SVEINSON,  
MARQUETTE, MAN.**



**PTE. JOHANN H. JOHANNSSON**—Born at Gimli, Man., March 16, 1906. Enlisted in Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders Aug. 20, 1941. Went overseas May, 1942. Discharged Nov. 15, 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. J. O. Johannsson, Gimli, Man.



**P.O. EINAR SIGURJÓN JONASSON**—Born at Gimli, Man., April 15, 1921. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Jan. 15, 1943. Served in Canada. He received the C.V.S.M. Discharged Feb. 22, 1945. Son of Mrs. Anna Margret Jonasson and the late Einar Sigurjón Jonasson, Gimli, Man.



**F.O. Fredrik S. Johnson**

**F.O. FREDRIK SIGURÐUR JOHNSON**—Born at Amaranth, Man., Feb. 13, 1922. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Nov. 15, 1942. Served in India, Burma and England. He was awarded the following medals: C.V.S.M. and Clasp, Pilot's Flying Badge, Operational Wings and Burma Star. Discharged Jan. 15, 1946.

**L.A.C. MARVIN ARNI JOHNSON**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., June 25, 1924. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. July 13, 1943. He served in Canada, England, Belgium, Holland and Germany. He received the following medals: Defence Ribbon, France and Germany Star and C.V.S.M. Ribbon.

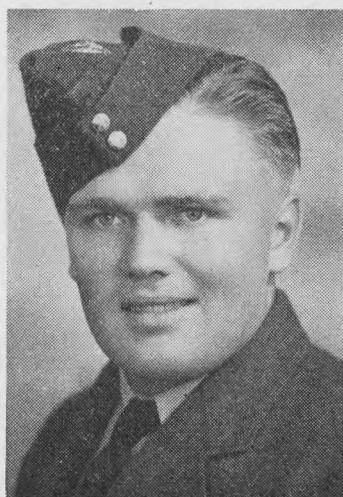
**SONS OF EGGERT & GUÐFINNA JOHNSON, WINNIPEG, MAN.**



**L.A.C. Marvin A. Johnson**

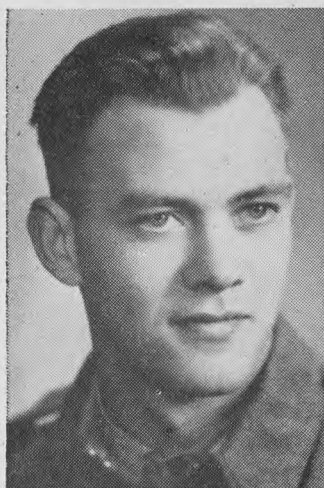


**L.A.C. SIGURÐUR INGERSOLL SIGURDSON**—Born at Lundar, Man., Dec. 20, 1912. Joined the R.C.A.F. June 1942. Was stationed at Brandon, Man., Calgary, Alta., and White Horse, Y.T. Discharged Dec. 1945. Son of Þórður and Guðbjörg Sigurdson, Lundar, Man.

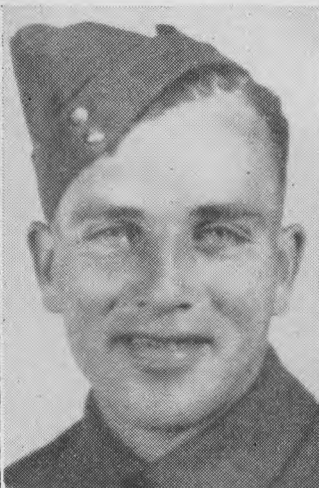


**L.A.C. SIGFUS JOHANNSSON**—Born at Lundar, Man., Oct. 16, 1922. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. May 19, 1943. Was stationed at Claresholm, Alta., Patricia Bay and Kamloops, B. C. Discharged Nov. 23, 1945. Son of Mr. & Mrs. Jón Johannsson, Lundar, Man.

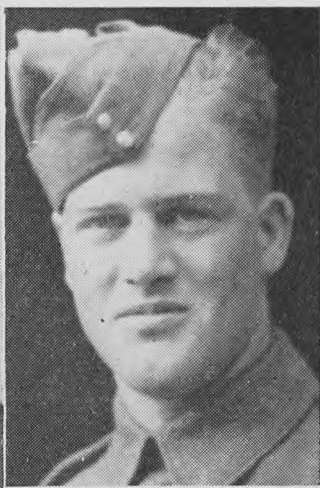
## Three Sons and Daughter



Cpl. K. A. Johannson



Cfn. V. E. Johannson



Gnr. H. L. Johannson

**CPL. KRISTJAN ALBERT JOHANNSSON**—Born at Osakis, Minn., Dec. 29, 1922. Enlisted in the Canadian Army at Wadena, Sask., March 4, 1942. Trained at Saskatoon, Sask., and Camrose, Alta. Served with the Headquarters Sqd., 4th. Cdn. Brigade in England and through the European theatre of war into Germany. Returned to Canada Jan. 1946. Disch. Feb. 1946.

**CFN. VICTOR ELMER JOHANNSSON**—Born at Minneapolis, Minn., April 23, 1916. Enlisted in the Canadian Army at Wadena, Sask., March 4, 1942. Trained at Guelph, Ont. Embarked overseas to England Aug. 9, 1942. Served with 1st Can. Infantry Troops Workshop R.C.E.M.E., in the Mediterranean zone, mostly in Italy. Contracted black diphtheria in Italy and spent a long time in hospital there and England. Returned to Canada Dec. 15, 1945. Discharged Jan. 23, 1946.

**GNR. HERBERT LARUS JOHANNSSON**—Born at Minneapolis, Minn., Feb. 16, 1918. Enlisted in Can. Army at Winnipeg, Man., March 1942. Trained at Ft. William, Ont. Left for England Aug. 9, 1942. Served with the 70th L.A.A. Bty., R.C.A., 8th L.A.A. Reg't., attached to 4th Cdn. Armoured Brigade in England and through Europe into Germany. Returned to Canada April 1946. Disch. May 4, '46.



Pte. J. S. Johannson

**PTE. JOHANNA SIGURBJÖRG JOHANNSSON**—Born at Mozart, Sask., Jan. 28, 1925. Enlisted in C.W.A.C. at Regina, Sask., June 1943. Trained at Vermilion, Alta., and then stationed at Chilliwack, B.C. Was discharged in fall of 1944 on account of ill health.

**SONS AND DAUGHTER OF JONAS L. AND HIS FIRST WIFE, THE LATE GUÐFINNA (ARNASON) JOHANNSSON, MARGO, SASK.**





F.S. Leonard R. Anderson



F.L. Marlyn B. C. Anderson

## "IN MEMORIAM"

**F.S. LEONARD R. ANDERSON**—Born at Vestfold, Man., June 14, 1918. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Feb. 1941. Trained as air observer. Embarked overseas Feb. 1942. Served with the 101st Squadron. Was reported missing Dec. 6, 1942.

**F.L. MARLYN B. C. ANDERSON**—Born at Winnipeg, Man., March 5, 1917. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. Jan. 2, 1941. Was instructor at Brandon, Man. Embarked overseas Feb. 1943.

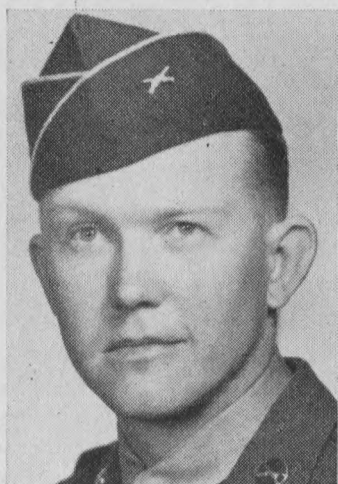
**SONS OF MR. & MRS. OTTO ANDERSON, WEST KILDONAN, MAN.**



**PTE. KJARTAN SKORDAL** — Born at Dafoe, Sask., Jan. 25, 1917. Joined the Infantry of the Canadian Army Nov. 1942. Went overseas Jan. 1945. Served in Holland and Germany. Discharged March 1946. Son of the late Indriði and Guðný (Jónsson) Skordal, Dafoe, Sask. Foster parents, Steingrímur and the late Sesselja Johnson, Wynyard, Sask.



**L.A.C. MARVIN DANIEL DANIELSON**—Born at Gimli, Man., Jan. 17, 1922. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. April 7, 1942. Was stationed at Toronto Ont., Montreal, P.Q., Suffield, Vulcan, Calgary, Edmonton, Alta., Gimli, Souris, Paulson and Winnipeg, Man. Discharged Mar. 21, 1946. Son of Helgi Daniel and Jónína Guðrún Danielson, Gimli, Man.



**Percival F. Hauson**

### PERCIVAL F. HAUSON

Born April 12, 1920. Entered the U. S. Army Feb. 11, 1944. Took basic training at Camp Croft, S. C., radio training at Fort Benning, Ga. Embarked overseas Nov. 1944. He was in England, France, Germany and Austria as radio operator with the 103rd Inf. Div., which fought through the Vosges mountains in France, the Maginot and Siegfried lines and through the Bavarian and Tyrolian Alps, into the Brenner Pass and the National Redoubt of the Nazi party. Returned to U. S. A. 1945. Discharged at Camp McCoy, Wisc., Nov. 14, 1945.

Son of John A. and Aurora Olgeirson  
Hauson, Mountain, N. D.



### MAJOR JÓN Ó. SIGURDSON, M.C.

Born at Seattle, Wash., Nov. 1, 1910. Commissioned in the U. S. Army Oct. 16, 1941 and called on active duty Dec. 2, 1941. Spent 3 years overseas in the Pacific theatre of war and 6 months in the European theatre. Still on active duty and is stationed at Ft. Knight in San Francisco area. Graduate of Manitoba Medical College in 1937.

Son of Mrs. Stefania and the late  
Rev. Jónas A. Sigurdsson,  
New York, N.Y., U.S.A.  
formerly of Churchbridge, Sask.,  
and Selkirk, Man.



**Major Jón Ó. Sigurdson, M.C.**



**Cpl. L. R. Sveinson**

### CPL. LAWRENCE ROSS SVEINSON

Born at Winnipeg, Man., Nov. 17, 1921. Enlisted Dec. 27, 1940 with No. 3 Army Field Workshop. Trained at Camp Borden, Ont., and Debert, N. S. Left for overseas Sept. 1941. The workshop later changed to 8th Cdn. Inf. Bde. Wksp. 3rd. Div. Served in United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Returned Oct. 28, 1945. Discharged Dec. 15, 1945.

Son of Mrs. Ingibjörg and the late Mr. Sveinson,  
Gimli, Man.

## *Letter, Requesting Original Musical Composition*

The Icelandic Canadian Club is planning to compile for publication examples of all original musical compositions, published or unpublished, written by persons of Icelandic extraction in North America. This project includes those who came from Iceland in their youth, as well as those born on this continent. Biographical sketches of the composers will be included in the published book.

Historically and culturally it is of the utmost importance to preserve for posterity the achievements of our people in the field of music, no less than in other fields of Art; and we feel sure that we will have the whole-hearted co-operation of the public in this work so that we may accomplish the desired end.

While there are a number of people who have done creditable work in this field and who have gained some recognition, we know there are others who may not have had the opportunities to develop this particular talent, but who have nevertheless had the urge to create something, even though it be in a very primary form. These people we wish to reach, as well. The various degrees of expression have their significance to this extent: they manifest potentialities and how widespread this talent lies among our people. The knowledge and understanding of this heritage may spur future generations on to widen their activities and cultivate a true appreciation of music.

We, therefore, appeal to every one to help us to collect all the material necessary to make this record full and complete. If you know of anyone who has experimented in musical composition, but has been too timid to let it be known, please be kind enough to give us that information. Also, will relatives and friends of composers who have passed on kindly give us the necessary details.

The compiled record will contain only one selection from each composer. The

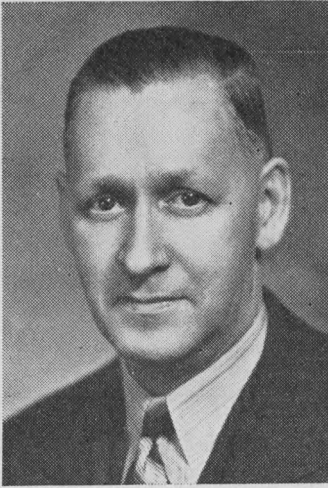
comments made will not be in the nature of a "critique," and there will be no unfavorable criticism of any of the works. We have prepared a form to be filled in by composers or possessors of original compositions. Please send a good head photograph.

### **Form for Composers of Musical Composition**

1. Give full name of composer, including (if) anglicized.
2. Date of birth.
3. If deceased, date of demise.
4. Place of birth.
5. Locality, past and present.
6. (a) If married, give husband's or wife's name and number of children. (b) Single? (c) Give names of parents, including some history.
7. State vocation, past and present.
8. State musical training (harmony, instrumental, vocal).
9. (a) State number of compositions published. (b) Name of Publisher. (c) Number of unpublished compositions.
10. State written arrangements, either as part songs, piano accompaniments or orchestral arrangements.
11. (a) State if composer has held office in any musical organizations. (b) Positions held, if any (Teacher, member of Orchestra or Choir).
12. Give Titles and number of Compositions submitted, send SIX compositions, if possible. NOTE: Compositions will be returned. Please enclose return postage.

Please submit all materials at your earliest convenience. If you need time to prepare your material or copy manuscripts, please communicate with the committee and let them know of your intention to participate in this subject. The committee: Mrs. Louise Gudmunds (chairman); Mrs. G. Kay Palmer, 690 Strathcona St., Winnipeg; Mrs. Lena Richardson, 851 Home St., Winnipeg.

## *John Sigurdson*



**JOHN SIGURDSON**

When a young boy migrates with his parents from Iceland, shows promise during formative years, accepts responsibilities as a youth, and becomes a more-than-average citizen of Canada's third largest city, we, as Icelandic-Canadians, are interested.

It is the "success-story" pattern of the popular Horatio Alger books.

Our interest increases when that same citizen concentrates his skill and artistic "know-how" in designing and building his own beautiful home.

Such a citizen is John Sigurdson, Vancouver, owner-manager of Western Canada's largest modern woodwork factory. Because of his extensive knowledge of the building industry, he now owns a residence which is unique in Vancouver and unusual in any part of Canada.

Unique and unusual because of its originality in design, the variety of woods used in its construction, and the many desirable modern labor-saving devices.

The house is set in one of the lovely new suburban districts. One notices the

exterior is of red brick, white cedar siding and Haddington Island cut stone. The main floor, of five spacious rooms, indicates the charming and distinctive use of selected hardwoods in floors and walls.

In the entrance hall is sixteen-foot teakwood panelling. In the dining-room are plain and "oyster" walnut. Mahogany, with ebony trim, is in the living-room, while bird's-eye maple is used extensively in the up-to-date kitchen and breakfast-nook. The walls of the den are soft golden orange, highly-polished Narra wood, native to Brazil. This room is oval in shape, so, in keeping with the contour of the room, the doors have been cut in a curve.

Also curved are three of the many lovely windows of the house and made of plate glass, six by seven in size.

Imported marble, pink from France and black from Italy, are used in the main fireplaces, but in the basement, however, the fireplace in the cedar-walled recreation room is of mahogany with mantle of Madagascar ebony. Adjoining this delightful room are two smaller rooms, also cedar walled, while nearby are the efficiently arranged utility rooms, the laundry and the oil-equipped furnace room.

One ascends from the basement to the two upper floors by a circular stairway, which is an artistic achievement. The stair treads on the upper half are of oak, but those leading to the basement are of soft cottonwood, which has been permeated in a chemical process into hard wood. Filtered light enters through the tall window of glass bricks, rounded to harmonize with the spiral of the stairway.

Three bedrooms occupy the upper floor. Here, all the woodwork is of prima vera (bleached mahogany) with rosewood knobs on the built-in furni-



ture. Two bathrooms are in colorful tile and vitriolite.

The entire house exemplifies the artistic talent, skill in craftsmanship and the mutual exchange of ideas which come only through years of experience.

★

From early childhood, John Sigurdson showed an aptitude for thoroughness and good taste in cabinet-making. None thought it strange that he should

difficulties, it also gave him the opportunity to specialize in hardwoods.

In 1927, a building boom created many demands for millwork of all descriptions. Aristocratic Shaughnessy Heights called for the best in woodwork. The new Orpheum Theatre was built, and the needs of a growing city kept the factory busy.

With the death of the elder Hanbury, in 1928, the plant was reorganized. Mr.



**Sigurdson's home at Vancouver**

build the family home in Bowsman River though at the time he was only nineteen.

When he came, in 1898, from Borgarfjörður, Iceland, his parents settled in Brandon, Man., where their eleven children attended the schools. John found extra occupation as sweeper boy in the sash and door plant of McDiarmid and Clark. Promotions followed as he grew older, and in 1925 the young foreman was invited to superintend the Hanbury factory in Vancouver, B.C.

Though the new position presented

Sigurdson took over the sash and door branch, under the name of the Sigurdson Millworks. Plans were made for new equipment in a new building.

Over the years, woodwork has been supplied for such super-structures as the City Hall, Stock Exchange, Medical-Dental, Marine, Royal Bank and Hall Buildings. Readers familiar with these names will recognize them as creating the famous sky-line which delights the traveller as he enters the harbor by ocean vessel. The Council Chamber in the City Hall is a tourist attraction,

being a beautiful symphony of red mahogany.

For the magnificent Hotel Vancouver, the Sigurdson Millworks imported decorative hardwoods from all over the world. A popular slogan described it as "not the largest hotel in the world, but the finest."

In 1933, his rise from "Sweeper Boy to Superintendent" provided a local radio station with one of a series of success stories. The years following have only increased his stature as a solid citizen and a good business executive.

When, in 1939, he was elected president of the Mainland Millwork Association, he consolidated their energies for warwork. The resulting efficiency reflected the driving force of his leadership during those crucial months of delivering the goods.

At hostilities' end he personally supervised the designing and construction of the long-looked-for home. The architect and contractor spared no pains in striving for perfection in workmanship. The family moved in on April 15th, 1947.

His wife is the former Enga Swinson, teacher, from Brandon. The third member of the family, Gordon, enters the Forestry course at U.B.S. this fall.

Throughout the home are to be seen many hand-carved pieces of furniture, lamps, tables, mirror frames, and a complete dining-room suite, all the work of a gifted wood carver employed in the factory.

John Sigurdson finds little time for recreation. He maintains membership in several clubs, the Rotary, Scandinavian Business Men's, Canadian, and Auto Clubs. He is a charter member of the Icelandic Lutheran Church, and president of a company of lumbermen who are studying the possibilities of processing of soft woods into hard by chemical means.

While the house is new, it continues to be a show place. As the years pass, may the Sigurdson family long enjoy abiding friendships of all who chance to cross the threshold.

LILLIAN T. SUMARLIDASON.

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## By Sea, By Air, They're Getting There



Surviving the wreck of the Nascopic are Sigurdur Alvin Sigvaldason and his bride, the former Svava Palson. They

were married June 20th, and probably felt that being the first couple to formally plight their troth in Geysir Lutheran Church was distinction sufficient unto the immediate future. But at Cape Smith, 100 miles below the Arctic Circle, awaited Mr. Sigvaldason's job. On July 6th the young couple boarded the Nascopic at Montreal, and looked forward to a three-year honeymoon isolated from other white people. The Nascopic foundered off Baffin Land. No lives were lost, but luggage and the whole boat-load of annual supplies for the isolated Arctic points had to be abandoned. Following their rescue the Sigvaldasons flew to Winnipeg, from there to start the journey anew to the Far North.

## In The News

### Honor Memory of Dr. Brandson

Honoring the memory of Dr. B. J. Brandson, a bronze plaque was unveiled August 23 in the Old Folks' Home, Gimli. The inscription, in Icelandic, reads: "Dr. B. J. Brandson, born June 1. 1874; died June 20, 1944. He had the welfare of the aged at heart. He was a staunch supporter of every just cause."

Mrs. Brandson, since the doctor's death, has held the office of president of Gimli Old Folks' Home.

Besides his widow, relatives of Dr. Brandson attending were Dr. and Mrs. J. Hillsman, Mr. and Mrs. D. Chevrier, and Dean Hillsman, grandson, who performed the unveiling.

Rev. S. Olafson, Selkirk, conducted the service accompanying the unveiling. Speakers included Dr. B. H. Olson, Mr. Justice H. J. Bergman and E. H. Fafnis, president of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod, who came from North Dakota to deliver the address. Many Winnipeggers also attended.

\* \* \*

### One-Man Icelandic Art Show Opens in Britain

LONDON, Aug. 13 (Reuters)—The first one-man show of Icelandic art ever held in Britain opened Tuesday at the gallery of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colors, but the artist, Asgeir Bjarnthorson, was forbidden to make a sale. A Board of Trade spokesman said: "We are not allowing pictures into this country except for exhibition."

\* \* \*

Professor Skuli Johnson has been elected for four years to the executive committee of the Humanities Research Council of Canada. Professor Johnson is well known in Literary Circles. He was a Rhodes Scholar in 1909.

\* \* \*

The well-known pianist, Mrs. Thelma Wilson, has been elected as President of the Junior Musical Club of Winnipeg.

Herbert Skuli Johnson, of Montreal, has been visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sigurdur Johnson. Skuli completed a post-graduate course at McGill, where he graduated as Doctor in Science. He is now employed in research work with the Canadian Aluminum Co., Three Rivers, Que.

\* \* \*

On April 22nd last the King of Sweden conferred the honor of the Prince Eugen Medal on the Icelandic sculptor, Einar Jonsson, in recognition of his art. The Icelandic Consul to Sweden received the medal on behalf of Einar Jonsson at a dinner at Prince Eugen's.

\* \* \*

The Icelandic government has honored Helgi Sigurdur Helgason, of Blaine, Wash., with a subsidy of 2,500 kronur and an illuminated address, in recognition of his contributions to Icelandic musical compositions, in particular the tune "Skín við sólu Skagafjörður". Mr. Helgason received this honor through the Icelandic Consul at Washington, Dr. Thor Thors.

\* \* \*

An exhibit of the paintings of Emile Walters was held at the well-known Munson Gallery, New Haven, Conn., in May last. This exhibit created wide interest, and Mr. Walters has received requests from New York, Pittsburg, and Philadelphia for similar exhibits of his work.

Thomas J. Watson, New York, has chosen one of Emile Walters' paintings to be hung in his United Nations Collection, which will be shown in various countries.

\* \* \*

Miss Nina Saemundson, of Hollywood, Cal., has returned to Iceland for a visit after an absence of 21 years. She intends to hold an exhibit of her work, Sculpture, Oil Painting, Crayon Portrait and Wood Carving in Reykjavik in the

near future. Among her works is a marble bust of Njall, the famed character in the Icelandic Saga Njala, but most of her work is fantasy.

When she returns to Hollywood, Cal., she will start work on a statue of Robert Browning for the Library of Waco, Texas.

\* \* \*

Early in June Rev. Eirikur Brynjolfson arrived from Iceland as an exchange minister for the First Lutheran Church, Rev. Eylands having taken over the parish in Iceland.

During the summer Rev. Brynjolfson has traveled widely in the Icelandic communities here, and has given addresses at the Icelandic celebrations at Gimli, Wynyard, and Blaine, Wash.

Early in September he assumed his duties as pastor of the First Lutheran Church of Winnipeg for one year.

\* \* \*

Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, the winner of the Icelandic Canadian Club traveling scholarship, has been spending the summer here visiting her family. While here she played in five piano recitals over CBC and in six sonata recitals with Pearl Palmason.

Snjolaug Sigurdson's piano recital held September 10th in the First Lutheran church, under the auspices of the Icelandic Canadian Club, was widely acclaimed by the press and the large enthusiastic audience. At the close of the program she was presented with a beautiful floral tribute.

"Much can be expected from this artist within the next few years," remarks S. Roy Maley, in the Winnipeg Tribune. Following are a few of his comments: "Beethoven Sonata, Op. 110 . . . the final fugue section had profound spiritual feeling, with much of the triumphal majesty of the closing pages conveyed with ease. . . . The Capriccio, Op. 116 (Brahms), brought further delight, and Miss Sigurdson's sympathy toward these particular pieces is so evident as to discourage argument. . . . Jeus d'Eau, by Ravel,

proved the highlight of the program. We were shown a new way of realizing the sparkling play of water. Here was none of the usual display of virtuosity but a luminous picture of the myriad lights and shadows in Ravel's impression of a fountain, with control of dynamics a primary feature.

"Chopin's Scherzo in B flat minor added a final colorful touch to the recital. It was played at a more rapid tempo than is orthodox, perhaps, but well sustained, and played with fire and dramatic feeling and arresting contrast between the serene and contemplative passages and the almost violent sequences, making of it not only a duet but a demonstration quite unconsciously of a 'split-personality' composition and, in doing so at times, achieving orchestral grandeur of tone."

Following the recital, Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Danielson held a reception in Snjolaug's honor at their home, 869 Garfield St., where a large group of her friends was given an opportunity to express their good wishes to her as she leaves for New York to start her third year of study with the eminent pianist—Ernest Hutcheson.

★ ★ ★

#### MISS ALDA PALSSON GRADUATES

Alda Palsson recently graduated from the senior school, Toronto Conservatory of Music. She is the daughter of Emilia Palsson and the well-known pianist and teacher, Jonas Palsson, who recently passed away at his home in New Westminster, B.C., having been at one time time professor in music at Columbian College. Alda studied with him until coming to Toronto in 1943 for intensive training under the internationally famous pianist, Madame Lubka Kolessa, and to study composition with Dr. Arnold Walter, Director of the Senior School. Since her arrival in Toronto Alda has been awarded several coveted awards, including a Scholarship in January, 1944, the Hazel Ireland Eaton Piano Scholarship for the season 1944-45, the L.T.C.M. Gold Medal in May,



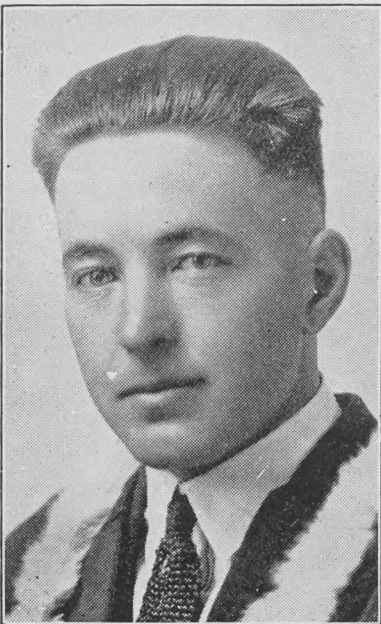
1945, and a full Scholarship for the two years of the Senior School, 1945-47. She possesses the degrees: L.R.S.M., A.T.C.M., and L.T.C.M.

Miss Palsson has given recitals in many Canadian cities, including Ottawa, Vancouver, New Westminster, Guelph, Hamilton, and Toronto, together with several recitals in the United States, and has played over the CBC network from both Vancouver and Toronto. Her playing has won warm acclaim.

★ ★ ★

Miss Agnes Sigurdson has left for New York to resume her musical studies with Madame Olga Samaroff. This talented young pianist is being assisted financially through a fund subscribed to by the public, sponsored by the Icelandic National League.

## Appointments



The Dominion government has appointed Edward B. Olson as superintendent of Indian Affairs, Selkirk. Mr. Olson resigned from the C.P.R. to assume his duties with the Department of

Indian Affairs. His district will be from Dominion City to Norway House. Edward graduated from the Manitoba University in 1924. He is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Olson, of Gimli, Man.

\* \* \*

The appointment of Judge Walter J. Lindal as chairman of the National Employment Committee was recently announced from Ottawa.

Judge Lindal has been chairman of the Court of Referees of the Unemployment Commission in Winnipeg since 1941, and will continue to fill that post in addition to his new office.

He was appointed chairman of the Local Employment Committee in 1941, and in 1944 was made chairman of the Regional Committee.

\* \* \*

Dr. B. H. Olson, of Winnipeg, has recently been appointed medical director of the Great-West Life Assurance Co., of Winnipeg. Dr. Olson has been with the Great-West Life Assurance Co. for a number of years as medical advisor.

\* \* \*

The appointment of H. H. Harvard Arnason, former member of the Art Faculties of Northwestern University and Hunter College, New York, to be chairman and professor of the newly-established department of art in the University of Minnesota was submitted to the University Regents at their meeting in Duluth recently.

"The appointment represents an important advance in the educational progress of the University," President J. L. Merrill said.

Professor Arnason was senior field representative of the Office of War Information in Iceland and the O.W.I.'s assistant deputy director for Europe in World War II.

Arnason's name headed a list of some 200 faculty appointments.

Professor Arnason was born in Winnipeg. His parents are Maria and the late Sveinbjorn Arnason. Harvard re-

ceived his elementary education at Principal Sparling and secondary education at Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute. He entered the University of Manitoba and completed the first two years. He then left with his parents for Chicago, Ill., and completed his court at Northwestern, Evanston, Ill., after receiving his B.A., then completed his work for the degree of M.A. at the same institution. He then entered Princeton University, where he received his Master of Fine Arts Degree and later his Ph.D. in Fine Arts.

\* \* \*



News has been received from Toronto that Lieut. Gustaf Kristjanson has been employed by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as production director.

Gustaf studied with the Academy of Radio Arts in Toronto and won a \$150 prize and other distinction. He is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan (1939). He served in the Royal Canadian Navy from 1942-1946. He is the son of Hakon and Gudny Kristjanson, Wynyard, Sask.

\* \* \*

The Icelandic National League has appointed Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson to travel among the various Icelandic com-

munities to assist and reorganize the various branches of the League, and further to organize study groups in Icelandic and the Icelandic classics, both for juniors and adults, wishing to increase their knowledge of Icelandic. This will be an unusual opportunity for the younger generation, as Mrs. Danielson has all the qualifications for this work.



**Unnur Claire (Olson) Watson** was born at Baldur, Man., later moved to Winnipeg, where she attended school, also studied at Manitoba University, took up the X-ray technicians' and Physio-Therapy course. Graduated in 1945, worked with the Winnipeg Clinic but is at present with Dr. Digby Wheeler. She also wrote exams permitting her to work in this line in the United States.

In 1940 Mrs. Watson organized a group of school children for the purpose of raising funds towards buying an ambulance. Under her direction this group of children, calling themselves The Winnipeg Troupers, gave a concert in the Laura Secord school, which yielded \$173.60. Thus the Manitoba School Children's Ambulance Fund was founded, under the guidance of Hon. Ivan Schultz, the minister of education.

This war effort of the children proved highly successful. Mrs. Watson, assisted by Fleurette McCuaig and the Academy of Allied Arts, arranged shows in other schools. The movement came to embrace 1,028 rural and suburban schools, with 60,000 children having a part in the work. During the first year a fund of \$17,000 was raised. With this sum were purchased two ambulances, two kitchen units and clothes valued at \$3,000 for children in bombed areas of Britain.

With the exception of the first concerts planned by Mrs. Watson, all other concerts were planned and presented by rural and suburban schools. The fund was handled by the department of education.

Mrs. Watson is the daughter of Mrs. Thora Olson and the late Guðmundur Olson, of Winnipeg.

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#### WINS COVETED SCHOLARSHIP

Word has just been received by Mr. Frank Thorolfson that he has been awarded the Oliver Ditson Scholarship granted to students of outstanding ability for advanced study in Musicology at the Chicago College of Music.

During the past summer Mr. Thorolfson took the full summer course at the college and enough extra-mural work to cover approximately a year of Musicology. This work he accomplished in six weeks and received an "A" in every subject, with the happy result of being the winner of this coveted Scholarship, which amounts to \$1,000. He will be leaving shortly to resume his studies at the Chicago College of Music. An account of Mr. Thorolfson's musical career was given in the Autumn, 1946, issue of the Icelandic Canadian.

Leading a field of 91 players, Art Finnson, Brandon, with a score of 109 for 27 holes won the championship flight in the annual south-western Manitoba tournament at Killarney Lakeside Golf Club Sunday, Sept. 3.

## Awards

Miss Hildigunnur Eggertsdottir arrived in Winnipeg from Iceland in September, 1946. She entered the Success Business College for a secretarial course on her arrival here, and has just completed this course with high honors, and received the gold medal award of the Business Educators' Association of Canada for proficiency in typewriting.

\* \* \*

Richard Leonard Beck won the Isbister Scholarship of \$80.00 at the University of Manitoba exams last spring in second year Electrical Engineering. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Beck, of Winnipeg.

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The prize awarded annually by the Canadian College of Organists (Winnipeg Centre) was won by Miss Margaret Mackeen, of Winnipeg. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Mackeen, of Winnipeg.

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Miss Ruth Skafffeld, of Westbourne, has been awarded the Toronto Conservatory of Music silver medal and the Frederick Harris Scholarship for Grade I Piano. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Einar Skafffeld, of Westbourne, Man.

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Allan August Beck won the Junior Musical Scholarship (Violin) in recent music exams. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Beck, of Winnipeg.

\* \* \*

Miss Thora Stefanson won the Tri Delta Scholarship (Arts 3).

\* \* \*

Miss Dorothy Sigurdson, Riverton, Man., won the Isbister Scholarship seconds for Grade 11.

#### SEVENTY YEARS OF COMRADESHIP

When two lives joined in marriage reach the end of 70 years together, felicitations are obviously in order. Kristjan Kristjanson and Svanfridur

Jonsdottir, of Eyford, N.D., passed this milestone on June 7th this year, and friends and relatives swarmed to their home from all parts of the United States and Canada to greet them and shower them with good wishes. Amongst the numerous letters and telegrams received on that occasion, they found a warm message from President Truman.

Mr. Kristjanson was born June 7th, 1850, and his wife on the 17th of October, 1855. They were married in Iceland on June 7th, 1877, and in July of the following year sailed to America, ending their journey in the Manitoba settlement then known as New Iceland, where a daughter was born to them a week after their arrival. In the middle of March the following year the little family piled their worldly belongings on a sled and were off on foot to look for greener fields. The first stop was Winnipeg, then they tarried four years in Pembina. Moving toward the larger Icelandic settlements, they spent several

years farming just east of Mountain, N.D., and finally settled at Eyford. Here they purchased land, and after two years of farming their small sod cabin was replaced by the fine family home they now occupy.

While death claimed two of their sons in childhood, Mr. and Mrs. Kristjanson have eight children to share this occasion. Three days before the anniversary a fifth generation came into being to swell the ranks of 75 descendants.

Health and happiness have accompanied this remarkable couple into their nineties. Guests are ever welcome in their home, and they retain a lively interest in the world around them. A fine needlewoman, Mrs. Kristjanson still turns out intricate pieces of needlecraft without the aid of eyeglasses. The old gentleman looks after the library, "Austri," which he houses under his roof, and which he did a great deal to establish 50 years ago.

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## *Icelandic Canadian Club News*

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The annual meeting of the Club was held in the Free Press Board Room, June 16th.

The President gave a summary of the various activities of the Club, and reports from committees were as follow:

**Scholarship Fund:** Paul Bardal, showed a balance on hand of \$190.00. A Travelling Scholarship of \$1,200.00 had been awarded to Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson.

**Social Committee:** Miss Steinunn Bjarnason. Four social gatherings had been held during the year, besides the two annual concerts.

**Save the Children Fund:** Mrs. H. F. Danielson.

**Community Hall:** Paul Bardal.

**Icelandic Chair in the University of Manitoba:** Carl A. Hallson.

**Icelandic Canadian Evening School:** Mrs. H. F. Danielson, showing that 1,400

copies of the book, Iceland's Thousand Years, have been sold; twenty of the thirty lectures given at the school have been printed; and \$400.00 is the balance in the bank. Other details of the work of the School were given in the Summer issue of the Magazine, and also a review of the various projects of the club in the Spring issue.

**Icelandic Canadian:** Reports were given by Mrs. Grace Thorsteinson, Miss S. Eydal, Miss Mattie Halldorson, H. F. Danielson and Judge W. J. Lindal, showing that the Magazine is acquiring more and more adherents and widespread support. The balance on hand is \$1,500.

The Club has launched into two new projects, which will prove of great importance culturally and historically. These are: (1) To locate and record places of historic interest in the Ice-



landic pioneer settlements. The committee to handle this is composed of Mr. J. J. Bildfell, Mrs. O. Stephensen, and W. Kristjanson. (2) To compile for publication examples of all original musical compositions, published or unpublished, written by persons of Icelandic descent in North America. The committee in charge: Mrs. Louise Gudmunds, Mrs. G. Kay Palmer and Mrs. Lena Richardson.

Election of officers: Past President, Carl A. Hallson; President, Axel Vopnfjord; Vice-President, Mrs. G. S. (Ena) Anderson; secy., Miss Lilja Guttormson; treas., Miss Steinunn Bjarnason; other members of executive—Paul Bardal, W. Kristjanson, H. J. Lindal, Mrs. B. S.

Benson, Dr. L. A. Sigurdson and Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson.

Social Committee: Ena Anderson, Helga Eggertson, Lena Richardson, Grace Ruppel, Gunnar Thorlakson.

Membership: Stefania Eydal, Steina Johnson, Jonas Jonasson.

Auditor: H. J. Lindal.

Icelandic Canadian Magazine: Editorial Board—Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson (chairman), Axel Vopnfjord, Judge W. J. Lindal, Prof. T. J. Oleson, Heimir Thorgrimson; business manager, Mrs. Grace Thorsteinson; circulation manager, H. F. Danielson; War Effort column, Miss Mattie Halldorson; News Editors, Miss Stefania Eydal and Miss Caroline Gunnarson.

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## *Changes in Personnel*

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The task of preparing for publication a Magazine such as the Icelandic Canadian, while pleasurable, is onerous and time-consuming. It is, therefore, not surprising that each year some members of our staff decide that the continued sacrifice of their few spare moments is too great a drain on their energy and, perhaps, not fair to their families.

After three years of faithful and efficient service, Judge Walter J. Lindal resigned as chairman of the Editorial Board, but yielded to the requests of his colleagues that he remain a member.

Gissur Eliasson found that the pressure of numerous activities necessitated the curtailment of some of these. As a result, we were deprived of the services of an able secretary.

Capt. H. F. Skaptason's transfer to another city rendered impossible the completion of his term of office.

To the foregoing members we extend our appreciation for services rendered. However, we do know that they will continue to take an interest in our Magazine, and, perhaps, at some future date may be prevailed upon to return.

Fortunately, we have retained the services of the majority of our staff.

Holmfridur Danielson was elected unanimously as the new chairman. Her qualities of leadership and cultural efforts are too well known to require comment. We were, indeed, fortunate that she agreed to act.

"Lella" Eydal remains with us as News Editor. Thus we are assured of the continuation of this interesting feature of our Magazine.

"Our War Effort" department, one of our most popular features, will continue under the capable direction of Mattie Halldorson.

Our efficient business manager, Grace Thorsteinson, remains with us; also Hjalmur Danielson, our indispensable, enthusiastic circulation manager.

Our replacements are such as to ensure the maintenance of the high standard set by their predecessors.

Prof. Tryggvi J. Oleson, of the History Department, United Colleges, Winnipeg, was born in Glenboro, Man. In the course of a distinguished scholastic career he obtained his M.A. degree at

the University of Manitoba, and did post-graduate work leading to the Ph.D. degree at the University of Toronto. Prior to his appointment to his present position, he was lecturer in History at the University of British Columbia. He has taken an interest and an active part in many public activities, and has written a number of articles for publication.

Heimir Thorgrimsson is the son of the late Rev. Adam Thorgrimsson. He was brought up at Lundar, where he received his elementary and secondary education. He obtained his University education in Winnipeg. For a period of

time he was the Editor of the Icelandic weekly, "Lögberg." He is a veteran of World War II, having been over in Italy and in Holland. At the present time he is associated with the legal department of D.V.A.

Caroline Gunnarson is also a veteran of World War II, having been a member of the C.W.A.C. Her ability and experience in writing will be an asset to our staff. She will be associated with Miss Eydal as News Editor.

The Icelandic Canadian is fortunate in securing the services of these capable people. We welcome them cordially to our group.

A. V.

## Early Historical Glimpses of Icelandic People in Winnipeg

Continued from page 8

land, of whom I shall have something to say later, was another.

Among the ladies prominent among the Icelanders in Winnipeg at that time were: Kristrún Ólafsdóttir, sister of Jón Ólafsson, Journalist and Poet; Kristrún Sveinungadóttir; Jóhanna Kr. Skaftadóttir; Rósa Jónsdóttir, wife of Jón Þórðarson before mentioned; Andrea Fisher; Helga Þorsteinsdóttir, later wife of Arngrímur Jonsson; and a little later the so-called Eyjólfsssted sisters—Signý, Björg and Sigurborg.

Besides the activities I have mentioned, this Icelandic Society served as an oratorical school for both men and women. The oratorical art was practised extensively, particularly by the men, whose ardor sometime became too animated for words alone, yet the often hotly discussed opinions did not interfere with their unanimity of purpose, nor disrupt the good fellowship of the members of the association.

On the 11th of August, 1878, a new organization came into being among the Icelanders in Winnipeg. On that date the first Icelandic congregation in Winnipeg was

organized. This organization was entirely separate from the Icelandic Society. The first officers of the new congregation were Jón Þórðarson, President; Arngrímur Jónsson, Secretary; and Andrea Fisher, Treasurer. The first deacons elected were Arngrímur Jónsson, Helga Þorsteinsdóttir (later Arngrím's first wife), and Jóhanna Kr. Skaftadóttir. These officers assumed all supervision over religious activities in the Icelandic colony in Winnipeg and served most efficiently in that capacity for nearly two years or until Jón Þórðarson and his wife, Rósa, left Winnipeg for North Dakota, where Jón became a farmer, grain buyer and a State Legislator, and Arngrímur and his wife, Helga, moved to Pembina, N.D., a severe loss to the congregational work in Winnipeg, particularly to the Sunday School they had organized and served masterfully.

I have now given a meagre resumé of the activities and general condition of the Icelanders in Winnipeg up to and including part of the year 1879, and I think that you will agree with me when

I say that the Icelandic colony lacked both permanency and solidarity up to that time and that, in spite of the activities before related, they were not many who could sincerely call Winnipeg their home.

In the year 1870 Manitoba, which up to that time bore the name Manito-Waba, which means in Indian language Great Spirit Narrows, entered the Canadian Confederation. The population of the Province at that time (or, rather, in 1871) was 11,963, consisting of 1,565 white persons, 5,757 French-speaking halfbreeds, 4,083 English-speaking halfbreeds, and 558 Indians. At the time our Province joined the Confederation its name was changed from Manito-Waba to Manitoba. The former Indian name was derived from a peculiar sound evoked by the current of the Narrows in Lake Manitoba and attributed by the Indians to Manito—the Great Spirit. The Indian word Waba means narrows.

At the time our Province joined the Confederation Winnipeg was a small hamlet, with a population of 215 souls. There was no bank, no post office, no lawyer, one doctor, one church, one small newspaper, one policeman, and about 20 buildings. When Winnipeg was incorporated as a city, three years later—in 1873—its population had grown to 1,800. But however important these events were historically, they had little effect on the permanence or the solidarity of the little Icelandic colony in Winnipeg. Its future was uncertain. Winnipeg as yet was a stopping-off place for those of our people who came and went. And even in the year 1879 we read in a letter from Arngrímur Jónsson from Winnipeg the following: "The health condition among the Icelanders in Winnipeg is good and they are calm. Last fall they talked much of moving away, when their compatriots in New Iceland talked the loudest of doing so from there. Most of the people here seemed to have little faith in New Iceland but had their eyes focussed on North Dakota. The unrest has quieted

down much, and moving away from here is now seldom mentioned. Men have very little to do, and up to the beginning of the year 1879 have had to hunt for any stray job they could find during the summer—in the winter sawing wood was their main stay."

This occupation of sawing wood was quite prominent in those days, and one of our poets, K. N., commemorated it in the following stanza:

Landar út á djúpið draga  
duglegir að saga við.  
Vilja fara við að saga  
og ætla að fara að saga við.

The necessary equipment for this wood-cutting occupation was a buck-saw, saw-horse and an axe. The men set out from their homes early in the morning with a saw in their hand and an axe on their shoulder, on which the saw-horse was hitched. Thus equipped, they went out into the winter's frost and snowstorms every winter morning—following the city lanes until they found a backyard containing an uncut pile of firewood. Then they walked to the back door of the house situated on the lot where the wood was and asked for the privilege of cutting and piling it at 50c per cord for soft wood—that is, Poplar, Spruce and Balsam—and 75c for hard wood—Tamarac, Birch, Oak and Elm.

We have now come to the point where the lack of stability, not only of the little Icelandic colony in Winnipeg but also of that city and even the Province of Manitoba, ceased. The change was brought about by improved transportation facilities. A railway was built from St. Boniface to the international boundary and completed in the fall of 1878 on the east side of the Red river, connecting St. Paul and Minneapolis with St. Boniface, and the first train over that line or branch arrived in St. Boniface on the 7th December, 1878. The main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, spanning this continent from

the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean, was being vigorously pushed westward and the steel had already reached Winnipeg, although the line had not been taken into operation and was not, until the first passenger train arrived over it, in 1886 from Montreal.

These events were of permanent benefit, not only to the Icelandic people in Winnipeg, but to all the people residing in the city and in the Province. Work now became plentiful, even though the wages in most cases were low—10, 15 and for special kind of work, even 20 cents an hour, or \$2.00 for a ten-hour working day. Of this the Icelandic people in Winnipeg and from New Iceland took full advantage. But these great events did much more than increase the chances of work and livelihood. They opened up a vast country of extensive and fertile prairies, forest lands teeming with fur-bearing animals and forest life of all descriptions, great lakes well stocked with palatable fish of various kinds and sunshine in abundance.

Stories of this Western Country spread and people from south, east and beyond the sea came with all their belongings to make their homes in the New West. The consequence of all this was the boom in Winnipeg in 1880.

In order to give you some idea of the land prices prevailing in Winnipeg before that boom I might point out that an acre of land where the Canadian Pacific freight sheds are now situated was sold for a spaniel dog, a lot west of Main Street was sold for an ox and a Red River cart, the corner of Logan Avenue and Main Street for \$100.00 on easy terms, and the southwest corner of Main and Portage Avenue for \$500.00, team of horses and a buggy. But the boom changed all this, and it, and the causes leading up to it, changed the status of the Icelandic colony in Winnipeg. From that date onward there was never any doubt of its permanence or solidarity.

The condition created by this boom

in Winnipeg was an entirely new experience for the Icelandic people. They, in all their history, had never been called upon to meet boom conditions.

There can be no doubt of the awareness of these Icelandic colonists in Winnipeg of the feverish activities going on all around them. They could not help noticing the rapidly increasing values and the chances of making money and making it fast, but with few exceptions they did not plunge into the seething caldron of speculation. Their united reaction was cultural. They started out by re-organizing their association for the third time and changing its name from the Society of Friends of Iceland to Framfara Félag Islendinga (Icelandic Progressive Association), which name it bore until it ceased to be.

Under the new constitution of this re-organized association, its general policy was the same as before—to assist the needy, teach the young, promote Christian culture, which evidently at that time was at a low ebb, although the congregation before mentioned was still in existence. The meetings of the new organization were frequent and very lively, as the members expressed their opinions forcefully on all questions, yet they were orderly, as the Icelanders were fast learning parliamentary rules and regulations.

Two main questions were under consideration at the time. First, a home for the organization. Some of the members maintained that the very future of the society depended on a permanent home. Others felt that it was beyond the means of the Association to build. The matter was discussed back and forth with little results for some time, until one of the positive leaders—Helgi Jónsson from Sandfell in Skriðdal in Suðurmúla-sýsla in Iceland, who then had acquired considerable money, offered to donate a building lot on the condition that the Icelanders in Winnipeg subscribed enough money to build the house within a year. This offer was accepted. The house was built and



the first meeting held in the new home on the 10th of July, 1882. One hundred Icelanders were present at that meeting. The second was the newspaper question. The newspaper, *Framfari*, was published at Icelandic River in New Iceland from 10th of September, 1877, to 30th January, 1880. When it suspended publication, or rather ceased to be, owing to a lack of support and the carelessness of its subscribers, it was felt by the leading men of the Winnipeg association, who, among others, were Jón Júlíus, Magnús Paulson, Helgi Jónsson, Friðfinnur Jóhannesson and Þorstein Einarsson, organist, that a newspaper in Icelandic was a cultural necessity for the Icelandic people now situated on this continent and for those who would follow.

The question was thoroughly discussed and carefully considered—both at the meetings of the Association and privately among the leaders of the organization, who came to the conclusion, with one exception, Helgi Jónsson, that such an undertaking was beyond the means of the organization. Helgi stood out firmly for the project and derided the others for their lack of courage and faith. Quoth he: "This project can successfully be carried out by any one man, provided he possesses faith and will-power." The consequence of this controversy was that the question was submitted to the leading men in the Icelandic settlements, who promised their support provided that a capable editor could be found.

The question was again dealt with at numerous meetings of the Icelandic Society and the field thoroughly combed for such a man, and it was eventually decided, on a motion submitted by Magnús Paulson, to engage as editor for the proposed publication a young and brilliant man who had graduated from a college in Iowa in 1881—Friðrik J. Bergman. He was brought to Winnipeg to talk things over and the project looked favorable indeed. A man, Árni Friðriksson, was sent to New Iceland

to find out if the type and other printing utensils could be bought from the defunct *Framfara* Printing Company. He reported, after considerable time, that the printing press, type and cases could be bought from the *Framfara* Printing Company for \$450-\$500. Subscription lists were started and even private donations offered. But for some reason, which now is difficult to explain, the enthusiasm for that worthy project receded and nothing further was done at that time.

In this same year, 1881, the first Icelandic Ladies' Organization arose. I have not seen the constitution of that organization. Unfortunately, I am afraid it is lost. But I do not need to see it. You and I know the inherent desire of all the ladies' organizations among us to alleviate suffering, bring cheer and comfort to the down-hearted—succour the needy and to assist every worthy effort, not only to victory but to a victory that carries me and you onward, to higher and nobler things.

I am convinced that you would agree with me, if I had time to tell you about many of the good deeds performed by the members of this first Icelandic Ladies' Association in Winnipeg, that they were no exception to this Golden Rule.

Some of their activities during their first operating year were—donation to newspaper *Framfari*, \$65.00; donation to the teaching activities of the Icelandic Society in Winnipeg, \$122.00; payment of tuition fees for two young Icelandic ladies attending convent school, \$87.00; donation of \$50.00 toward Monumental Fund of Hallgrímur Petursson. And yet they still had \$150.00 in the treasury at the end of their fiscal year.

This same ladies' organization did much in alleviating the trials and difficulties of the newly-arrived Icelanders from Iceland, who generally landed first here in Winnipeg. They went as far in that humanitarian work as to put up a restaurant in the Immigration

Hall, where they dispensed free, milk and food to those of their newly-arrived compatriots who neither had food nor money to pay for food; for which service their only reward was the satisfaction of having performed a labor of love and a most becoming testimony and a sincere appreciation and thanks from Mr. W. C. Graham, Superintendent of Immigration in Winnipeg at that time.

The first officers of this first Icelandic ladies' organization in Winnipeg were: Krístrún Olafsdóttir, sister of Jón Ólafsson, journalist and poet, President; Sigrður Jónsdóttir Björnson from Héðins höfði in Iceland, First Vice-President; Hólmfríður Guðmundsdóttir, Secretary; Krístrún Sveinungadóttir, Treasurer; and Guðný Jónsdóttir Björnson.

There was also the third organization of note that came into being among the Icelanders that same year—1881. It was called "Gróðafélagið" (The Investment Company). I need hardly explain that it was organized to give the Icelanders in Winnipeg opportunity to take advantage of the rapidly rising real estate prices. But before the Investment Company was organized, some individuals among the Icelanders in Winnipeg had taken advantage of the new speculative chances offered. The first Icelandic to do so was Helgi Jónsson. He bought the first lot purchased by our people in Winnipeg in the fall of 1880. Helgi held this lot for a short time and sold it at a good profit. He continued his activities and made money. Helgi, who was a carpenter by trade, was the first Icelandic to build a house in Winnipeg. He built that house on McWilliam Avenue—now Pacific Avenue—just west of Isabella Street, and it stands there yet. Others to take early advantage of the boom times were Jón J. Júlíus. His success was notable. He bought two lots on Jemima Street—now Elgin Avenue. He paid \$400.00 for the both lots, built on the property which cost in the neighborhood of \$250.00, but sold the property two

months after the house was built and cleared \$500.00 on the transaction. That house was occupied by Sigurður Bárðarson for many years, and is now owned by Mrs. Lýður Lindal.

Jón Júlíus bought another two lots further west on Elgin Avenue and built on both. One of these houses—585 Elgin Avenue—was owned and occupied for a long time by Mr. and Mrs. Finnur Jónsson. The other—587 Elgin Avenue—was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Gísli Goodman, and later by Kristján Kristjánsson, shoemaker. Both these houses are still occupied. Others of the early real estate investors among the Icelanders were Eyjólfur Eyjólfsson, and a young lady, Guðrún Jónsdóttir from Máni in Þingey-jarsýsla in Iceland. She started with \$20.00, but after two months this small capital had increased to \$400.00 in her capable hands.

Many peculiar circumstances of the real estate dealings of the early Icelanders occurred which I have no time to relate, but for the following two I am indebted to the late Rev. Fr. J. Bergman, as well as for a number of other facts in this discourse.

The lots in Winnipeg were principally sold by auctioneers in those days, and men came to these auctions and bought indiscriminately.

At one of these auction sales, two Icelanders came along. One had just arrived in Winnipeg, after working out of the city on a railroad, and had considerable money. The other was Bárður Sigurðsson from Eisustaðir in Eyjafjörð in Iceland. Bárður tried to induce the man to buy, but he lacked courage, so Bárður put in a bid for \$150.00, but when he came to pay the deposit of \$50.00 he found that he had only \$6.00. He asked the man who was with him to lend him \$44.00, which he did. He held this lot for a month when Jón Júlíus came along and paid him \$250.00.

Björn Guðmundsson Skúlason from Vestur Hóp, Húnavatns-sýsla in Iceland, later known as Björn Byron, came to one of these auctions, where men

bought freely. He thought that something really worth while was being offered when men were so free with their money. The auctioneer, who by the way was a well-known man and citizen by the name of Wolfe, was asking advance on bids for a lot situated no one knew where. Björn offered \$15.00 and the lot was sold to him. When he found out that his lot was located on Burrows Avenue, far out on the prairie, he did not even go to see it. Björn had held the lot for three weeks when Jónas Bergmann, captain, came along and wanted to buy it. Björn said that he could get it for \$125.00. Bergmann offered \$100.00. Björn shook his head and said "No." "All right, split the difference," said Jónas. Bergmann got the lot and Björn \$112.50.

I want again to refer to the Gróða-félag (the Icelandic Investment Company). That organization was unique in some respects. It was not a closed corporation, as so many of our investment companies in this country are, but more of a co-operative concern, which anybody who wished could join by paying money or giving security in valuable and saleable goods to the amount of their holding in the company. When goods were accepted, they were valued and the holder allotted an interest in the present value of the company's assets equivalent to the value of the security and a certificate issued by the company for whatever the interest of the new member amounted to.

Another peculiarity of this Icelandic Investment Company was that any member could withdraw from the company and get his share paid in cash at the then present value of the company's assets at any time, and a number of men did that very thing and left the city for the Icelandic colonies which were then being formed. I am not concerned with the practical sides of the privileges mentioned. What I am concerned with is to point out that they prove conclusively that the motive of the organizers of the Icelandic Investment Com-

pany was to give the Icelanders in Winnipeg a chance to profit by the favourable conditions then available, not any selfish ambitious aspirations as some have interpreted them.

The capital of the Icelandic Investment Company amounted to \$14,757.00 or thereabouts, and by far the biggest part of that capital was represented by real estate buildings. The number of investors was about 41. The amounts invested by each varied from \$2,049.40 by Jón J. Júlíus to \$100.00 by several.

Jón Júlíus was elected manager of the Investment Company and Friðfinnur Jóhannesson from Skriða in Hörgárdal in Iceland and Kristján Jónsson from Héðinshöfði his assistants, together constituting the Board of Directors. This Investment Company started out splendidly. The profit made from 9th November, 1881, to the 20th of the same month is shown to be 15%, and from 28th of November to 30th December is shown to be 8%.

During the winter of 1881 the activities of this company were quite extensive. It had two new houses built on Ross Street, which, when finished, rented for \$40.00 per month each, and, as the company had also decided to enter wider commercial fields, it had a large store built on Ross Street—about midway between Sherbrook (then Nena) and Isabella Street, on the north side. When the store was finished, the company started trading with three kinds of merchandise—groceries and meats downstairs, under the management of Baldvin L. Baldvinsson, and a shoe department upstairs, under the management of Andrés Reykdal.

When I mention this enterprise of the Icelandic Investment Company I must state that they were not the first to enter the commercial field. Another Iclander was there before them—Árni Friðriksson—a well and favourably known man among the Icelanders on both sides of the international boundary.

Árni came to Winnipeg in 1875 in the autumn and worked for a shoemaker

(Árni was a shoemaker by trade) until 1st May—for his board only. In the fall of 1876 he went to Gimli and put up a shoe repairing shop and small shoe store there. He moved to Winnipeg again after a short stay at Gimli, and on the 23rd day of June, 1879, the following advertisement appears in Framfari: "I have opened a General Store on Main Street in Winnipeg, just north of the Civic Offices (City Hall now)." Then follows a lengthy list of merchandise and prices.

Árni sold this store after operating it for a year to one Gísli Jóhannesson from Skagafjörður in Iceland for \$300.00, and went to North Dakota for a while.

With all these materialistic and remarkable activities of the Icelandic people in Winnipeg at this time, they did not forget or even shirk their social life. All the organizations met frequently and discussed the burning questions of the day with a frank and open mind. The teaching under the supervision of the Framfara Félag went forward. The cultural exercises in music were still carried on, under the leadership of Jón Júlíus. Sunday services were still read and Sunday School operated. Concerts were held both at the instigation of the Framfara Félag and the Ladies Association. At one supper entertainment sponsored by the ladies, 10 speeches were delivered and 12 musical selections rendered, besides some other items on the same program.

In 1880 an Icelandic Drama—*Sigríður Eyjafjarðarsól* by Árni Jónsson from Þverá in Eyjafjörð, Iceland — was staged under the supervision of the Progressive Association. The principal roles in the play were played by Magnús Paulson (Hallgrím the Outlaw) and Aldís Laxdal (*Sigríður*, the Sun of Eyjafjörð). The play proved very popular. Among the people who attended the play (and they included most of the Icelanders in Winnipeg) were Reverend and Mrs. Jón Bjarnason, then on their way to Iceland.

The winter of 1882 was a memorable

one—particularly the latter part of that winter—for its snowfall. The roads and thoroughfares became almost impassable and the snow lay so deep over the prairies that the antelope and caribou were clubbed in their tracks by men on skis, and when spring came one of the worst floods this part of the country has experienced resulted. The prairies—east, west and south—were converted into one vast lake. Trains carrying immigrants and their effects from the south were moored. Some of the immigrants tried to proceed in boats—others turned back south, where they came from, and had nerve-racking tales to tell. Cattle starved and drowned. Hay went to \$80.00 per load in Pembina and \$100.00 in Brandon. This calamity caused a great and general discouragement among the people in these western regions. Immigration from the east and south of English-speaking people ceased and the boom in Winnipeg collapsed.

I need not point out that this collapse affected the Icelanders in Winnipeg no less than others. Some of them held partly-paid properties. These lost all they had in many cases. The Icelandic Investment Association was hard hit, but it did not suspend operations at once. They could not sell any of their property and the rent for two houses which the association owned on Ross Street fell from \$40.00 per month to \$12.00. The association continued to operate its store on Ross Street for a year and supplied its members with necessities of life during that period—even those who had lost their all in the unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances. After a year the association could carry on no longer. Its remaining assets were divided among its members, pro rata, and the association ceased to be.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—My time is up and I sincerely regret that I am compelled to leave this ominous cloud so threatening and low. But I assure you that behind it the sun was shining



and soon broke through, and shone again in all its glory on the growing Icelandic colony in Winnipeg, on the city, and the New West.

Main sources of information: The Icelandic newspapers, Heimskringla and Lögberg; Almanak Ólafs S. Thorgeirssonar; private letters; material in city of Winnipeg archives.

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## *The Red Ensign*

(From the "Press Release," Ottawa)

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The debates in Parliament in the fall of 1945 (beginning on November 8, 1945) and the subsequent appointment of a committee to consider the whole problem of a national flag for Canada, have given rise to a considerable amount of interest on the part of the general public in the Red Ensign—its history and official status.

Before 1867, the flag in general use in Canada was the Union Jack. However, with the passing of the British North America Act and the declaration of the new federal union on July 1, 1867, the need for a symbol to personify the new country was widely felt. This need was met through the use of what has come to be known as the Canadian Red Ensign—a flag made up of the British red ensign with the Canadian coat of arms in the fly. This flag was flown from all government buildings after 1867, and it was in common use throughout the country. It was flown from the tower of the Houses of Parliament at Ottawa from 1867 to 1904.

In December, 1891, the question of its authorization for use on Canadian merchant ships was brought up. Lord Stanley commented at that time: "I submit that the flag is one which has come to be considered as the recognized flag of the Dominion both ashore and afloat, and on sentimental grounds I think there is much to be said for its retention." In 1892 the red ensign was authorized by admiralty warrant as the flag to be flown by merchant vessels of Canadian registry. It was, however, never formally adopted as a national flag, and in consequence, on

the instructions of the Minister of Public Works, it ceased to be flown over Government buildings after 1904.

World War I, in somewhat the same way as earlier Confederation, but in a more significant and urgent manner, pointed to the general need for some distinctively Canadian flag. When Sir Arthur Currie, after the armistice, marched into Mons, he carried a flag, which, while imperfect in design, was still to all intents and purposes the Canadian Red Ensign. An order-in-council of 1924 authorized the use of the Canadian Red Ensign "over all premises owned or occupied by the Canadian government abroad." In 1925 the government appointed a committee to examine the whole problem of the choice of a Canadian flag, but no action was taken and the committee was disbanded. Since then the question has been debated in Parliament a number of times in 1931, 1932, 1933, 1937 and 1938.

During World War II the Red Ensign came into quite general use. On October 22, 1943, the cabinet war committee authorized its use when Canadian forces were serving with the forces of other nations. It was flown at both Quebec conferences (1943 and 1944) together with the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes. It was flown at the San Francisco meeting of the United Nations with the flags of forty-nine other nations. It was flown from the top of the Peace Tower on V-E Day, on V-J Day, and on authority of P.C. 5888, it was flown from the Peace Tower at the opening of Parliament on September 6, 1945. It flies from the top of the Peace Tower today.

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